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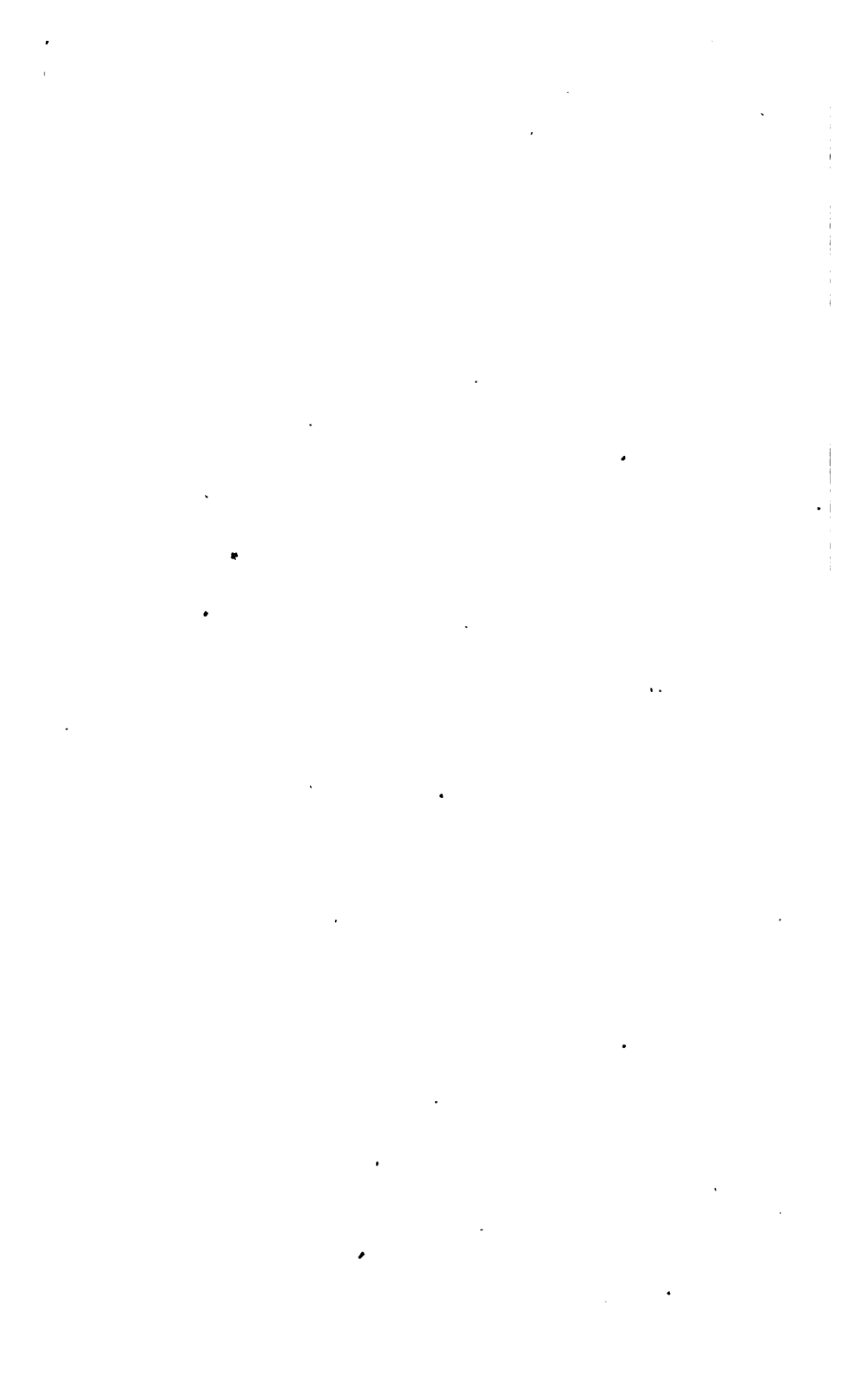




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TRACINGS.

OR OUTLINES OF

THE FOLLIES, &c., OF THE DAY.

BY

TREVELYAN TURNHAM, Esq.



LONDON:

HOPE & CO., GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.

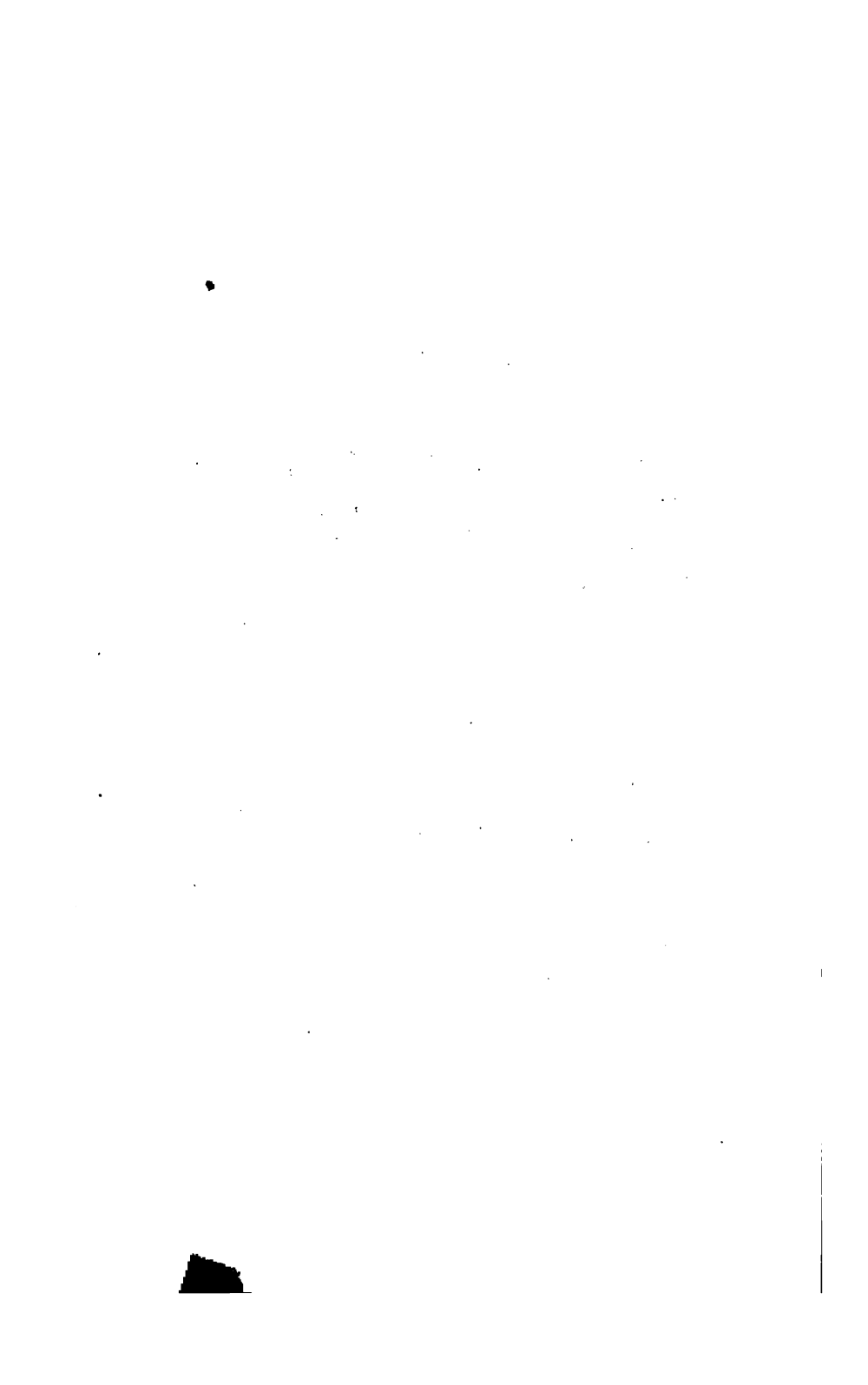
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P R E F A C E.

TRACINGS of what?—of hobby-horses, on which the world ride; popular errors, by which the world, or a part of it, is ridden: some things about many things, and many things about some things. Among all this—which, however, will consist of light reading rather than deep thinking—I may be able to suggest (for I consider myself rather a remembrancer than a teacher) some useful hints on useful subjects,—it being an excellent rule, and especially applicable to these times, that even in our amusements we should not forget sense; and that every man, in arising from the perusal of a book, should be wiser and better than before.



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TRACINGS.

CHAPTER I.

In which the Author discourses on Hobbies.

HOBBIES, or hobby-horses, belong (so it might be supposed) to Natural History, and a question may arise as to the particular species which would claim them for its own : a very proper inquiry, but one that cannot be easily answered. However, I may speak with confidence thus far—they are of various, indeed, numberless varieties. They have existed in all ages and all lands. They were among the millions of Xerxes, and the followers of Hannibal and Cæsar. They have ranged themselves under the inspiring and guiding influence of the Crescent and the Cross. Many were bred and reared in Arabia, in Tartary, in the Low Countries, and even in Leicestershire ; indeed, in every district celebrated for a fine breed of horses.

And now, having arrived so far,—like a traveller who, in his necessary progress, gains the summit of a hill, but knows not what direction to take in descending,—I can scarcely tell what the creatures are, whose portraits I am painting, or what they are not. This, however, I know, they are of all sizes, all varieties of colour, all kinds of disposition, and all sorts of capability. As to speed, we cannot say much of some that are non-locomotive; but, in respect of others, they carry a man from Dan to Beersheba in no time, and plunge him into all sorts of predicaments. As to strength, they sometimes carry a nation on their back; sometimes the great globe itself (without the aid of elephant or tortoise), and the vault of heaven. As to airiness and lightness, they can climb up a *cumulus stratus*, or trot beautifully up a moon-beam. As to shape, though they exist in a figure, they have no figure at all, whereas (*mirificissimum est*) a horse without a figure really possesses a figure.

In plain language, then, hobby-horses are pet projects, favourite pursuits, which engage the attention, excite the energies, banish the cares and *ennui* of mortals, and allow them to see, not only no charm in indolence, but little or no beauty or comeliness in anything besides themselves.

As an illustration of national hobbies, I may refer to war—the largest, the most gorgeously-trapped, the most expensive, the most vicious

hobby that ever existed. With a few attractions, it combines the dark features of all the ill-favoured existences of earth. It has generally been petted and guided by sovereigns; but groomed and fed by the people. Its omnivorous appetite devours, not only the contents of the pocket, but the flesh and blood of its votaries. It is a colossal Juggernaut, to whom millions have been sacrificed without appeasing its cravings for misery and death. It has, with its feet, torn down thrones and temples, destroyed cities, and laid kingdoms in ruins. Its breath is fire, and its neighing as the noise of many thunders.

One branch of dishonesty (and it is nothing less, even if ambition and cupidity be surrounded by a halo of glory) is for a nation to wish, or endeavour, to take possession of the property of another. As long as there are individuals without a sense of honour or honesty, there will be communities of this class. Any man is not all wrong: but the plea of necessity sometimes burkes the right, and leaves the wrong to act for itself. Nations, also, possess divers characteristics; and, in peculiar times, teachings of honour and honesty are drowned in clamours for glory, plunder, and revenge.

War has been termed a game, while some games have resembled war. The gladiatorial spectacles of the Romans were of this kind, and

so are the barbarous and disgraceful bull-fights of the Spaniards—forming (if they may be so termed) a pair of spectacles, in which we may behold a great deal of the infirmity of human nature. The one, a cold-blooded combat of man with man for the diversion of, perhaps, cowards; and the other, of brutalized men with brutes for the entertainment of persons in whom, of course, little exists that is worthy of high-minded and cultivated human beings.

The Olympic games were manly engagements; though they would have been, if more consistent with decency, more honourable to the Greeks. The hobbies or sports of the Romans seem to have been of a very inferior character. The Lupercalia, for instance, having been very silly, and the Floral games very immoral. Many nations have copied the Greeks in their manly recreations. Tournaments were a kind of playing at war. In Europe, during the middle ages, public games or pastimes degenerated into brutality or frivolity. Popular songs exhibit the character of a people, and so do popular games. In many instances, the anniversary days of honour to heroes and demigods were transformed into saint's days, without any marked distinction between Christian and heathen recreation. However, all these were pets or favourites; and so are the Carnival and other kindred pastimes—most assuredly, very

silly, very unworthy of the patronage of full-grown men and women; and, being connected with religion—a “double-entry” account) so much on the debtor, to go against so much on the creditor, side of abstinence and self-denial—it is a most unauthorized and ridiculous affair. Not authorized, I have said, but it is unfortunately sanctioned by ecclesiastical, as well as other authorities; and forms, perhaps, an illustration of authorization without authority.

Words are strangely variable and contradictory in their character and uses. In verbal matters, if nothing else, extremes meet. Contrary terms are mutually convertible. Early times, for instance, are olden times. The earth was young when the days were ancient. Many things, not expressed in words, are understood as if expressed. Thus we have the “Life” of a man who has been dead for a century, and the “Remains” of another who has been long since turned to dust. In some instances, ministers profess to “improve” the death of a person; and if, in these cases, as well as others, we did not supply omissions, and give a fictitious signification to the expressions, they would signify nothing.

We sometimes talk of the meaning of words as if it were innate and positive; whereas, all that can be said is, that certain verbal symbols have been used to express certain ideas or feelings.

Other words might have been employed for the same things, or the same words for other things. The word *gom*, which has no meaning, may be made to signify the universe. Words are vehicles for conveying mental wares. They may contain what is ludicrous or sublime ; or, indeed, the one in one age, and the other in the next. Certain terms are employed to designate an act, then a thing ; sometimes obloquy, afterwards compliments. On one occasion language is used literally, on another figuratively ; sometimes with sincerity, at others with irony. Words do not signify any more than they were intended to express. We judge of them from their present lading ; and in examining their history, discover what other wares they had been the honoured—or dishonoured—means of transporting.

What is termed a “fulness of meaning” in an author is, not unfrequently, to be attributed to the fertile imagination of the reader. It must not be supposed that whatever we see in words and phrases was seen by the writer. A word remains the same word, and a phrase the same phrase, whether it were the expression of deep or superficial thinking. Commentators and annotators have discovered a mine of expression in what was written almost without thought. All branches of science, art, and literature, have been supposed to be “shadowed forth” by authors, who would be

astonished and extremely gratified (if their modesty would allow it) at a discovery of comprehensiveness and "fulness of meaning" in their writings, of which they had no conception.

We will imagine some admirer of an author commenting on a sentence of the latter in the following words—"Let us look for a moment at a beautiful and comprehensive passage: 'Man is the noblest work of Nature,' an expression penned on the *multum in parvo* principle—the vastest conceptions condensed into the smallest possible compass. The author, in his mental view, had drawn out before him the heavens and the earth, our solar system, the stars visible to the naked eye, the innumerable planets that, in sublime harmony, wheel around them; the more distant suns perceptible to aided vision only, and those innumerable clusters (nebulæ) each of which is vast as the visible universe. Powerful telescopes carry us to the verge of the magnificent creation, a relative verge, which becomes expanded in proportion to the capabilities of optical instruments; all this, says the writer, is comparatively nothing—'Man is the noblest work of Nature.'

"Then he looks at the terrestrial creation—the surface of our globe, the lofty and magnificent mountains, the silvery river, the gushing, sparkling cataract, the flower-bespangled valley, the beasts, the birds—in fact, the earth, robed in

beauty, and instinct with melody ; but all, he says, is comparatively nothing. Man, endowed with mighty intellect and encircled with heaven-descending rays of immortality, is incomparably the noblest work. What a fulness of expression ! How profound, how comprehensive is the mind of the writer !” And yet it was probably written—just as the next sentence, or the preceding one—as a mere truism !

Some enthusiasts have gone so far astray as to conclude that whatever a person thinks on reading a favourite author, was the meaning of the writer : agreeably with the tintinabulary canon—

“What the fool thinketh,
That the bell tinketh.”

CHAPTER II.

My Pedigree.

I **FEEL** much diffidence in introducing my own affairs to the reader ; but if I do say a few words on this subject, I shall, I hope, be pardoned. The Turnhams are an ancient family. The name has been variously spelt. In the 12th century—for I cannot go further back, though undoubtedly the progenitors of that generation lived before—the name was spelt Turnahame, and in the 15th Turnhame. On the maternal side I can boast (if worthy of it) of very high parentage. My mother, who was a worthy and excellent woman, (and really, I think, most mothers, with whom I have any acquaintance, are of this character,) was, if proud at all, proud of her origin. This feeling, when it relates to ancestors worthy of esteem, is of course allowable—perhaps commendable; when it refers to those of no importance, it is an “ amiable weakness.” Of course, we all sprang from

our predecessors. We did not arise out of the earth. When we congratulate ourselves, it should be for something positive rather than negative. Some people are proud because they were not this, and that, and something else; until, at last, it would seem as if they estimated themselves highly because they were nothing at all.

My maternal grandfather was a great antiquary; and, by skill and perseverance, succeeded in tracing his line up to—— Here I may observe, that the definition of a line—length without breadth—will not apply in this instance, for this line had considerable breadth as well as length. However, I was going to say that my maternal grandfather traced his origin to Gwldydd ap Ymfwrygwelaf ap Rhagymadcynhwylod, &c. &c.; but it would be useless to go so far, unless I were to give (as my maternal grandfather has done) the whole of the lineage, with a brief notice of each individual. He embodied this genealogical history (a work, it may be supposed, of immense ingenuity and toil) in four 4to MS. volumes, which he left, as a token of his affection, to his “heirs and assigns” for ever. The ancient individual aforesaid was (my maternal grandfather conjectured) the seventh of his line, though *he* was a contemporary of Adam. He accounted for this discrepancy, or apparent anachronism, by concluding that Wales was peopled before Eden; and that Moses con-

fined his attention to the latter because it was the birth-place of the progenitors of the Jewish people. It is evident, however, that the old gentleman, sailing in such high latitudes, lost his reckoning. Indeed, if *he* could obtain a "sight" of the sun, it was more than his remote ancestor could do, inasmuch as he must have stepped on the earth some considerable time before the sun had made his appearance.

Sometimes, association influences us by contraries; sometimes by similarities; and sometimes by what is not directly one or the other. I am reminded of a curious paper, read at a meeting of a society, by one who, like my maternal grandfather, had lost his reckoning, and taken any course but a direct one to the haven of sound philosophy and common sense.

"Nov. 26th.—Professor Chronos, V.P., in the chair. A paper was read by Dr. Miste, 'On the origin and characteristics of chaos and old night.'

"The Doctor said that, owing to the kindness and patronage of that society, he had been enabled to prosecute his arduous investigations. He was not, he added, an Englishman; but, as some who were present knew, a native of Germany, and the president of a society of antiquaries at Meddlefogh. During his residence in England, his attention had been frequently excited by the

humidity and obscurity of the atmosphere. He hoped that now, as the result of many elaborate experiments, he should be able to show the connexion between the phenomena of modern times and those of ancient days.

“ ‘And here,’ said the learned Doctor, ‘I must, perhaps, correct myself. For it is well known that chaos existed before diurnal revolutions were appointed. The antiquity of my subject being so high, it is right that I should bring it before this assembly. The Royal Society may have been glad to have had it; but the limited operations of that body, and the general dearth of imagination among its members, induced me to confine all my communications to this learned and enterprising assembly.’ (Much applause.)

“ ‘I am decidedly of opinion that the ancient chaos was not employed (agreeably with the theories of poets and would-be philosophers) in the formation of the earth, but the latter and the inhabitants were composed of other materials. If any one thinks that his body is formed out of chaotic matter, or his head filled with it, he is welcome to the opinion; but, Mr. President and gentlemen, we know, in respect of ourselves, that we have no claim to this origin!’ (Great applause.) ‘I am fully convinced that the chaos, which existed in ancient times, is now and ever will be—as long as the world shall last; and that it has appeared,

or some part of it, in all ages and in almost all countries. I have now—what I beg to submit to the notice of this society—a bottle of mist from the coast of Kent; one of London fog; and, by the kindness of a learned friend in Germany, a bottle of the cloudy obscurity which prevailed in the “dark ages!” (Great sensation, and cries of “Order, order.”) Yes, Mr. President and gentlemen, I now present these, and you will find that (with a certain proportion of smoke in the London sample) the kinds are extremely similar!’

“After an anxious and almost breathless examination of these specimens by the members, it was decided that, as the Doctor had intimated, they were nearly identical.

“‘I lament,’ continued the learned speaker, ‘that I have not been able to procure any of the original chaos; but we may conclude that this is of no real consequence. I consider samples of fog of various ages as so many proofs in favour of a particular theory—they are links of evidence. Now, if I produce a part of the chain, and the links of this are homogeneous, we infer that the remaining part is of the same kind. This analogical reasoning is of the strongest character, and, if so, other reasoning must be comparatively weak; hence it follows that the proofs which I have had the honour of displaying before you are more convincing than if I had been able

to procure a sample of the original chaos, and thus have made the chain complete.' (Much cheering, and cries of "Hear, hear!" "Order, order!")

"The learned and laborious orator concluded his paper with a peroration highly laudatory of researches that withdrew the heaven-born mind from the turnpike and railroad-journeyings of common life, and raised it into what may be termed the sublimities of time and space. 'Thus,' said the lecturer,—in a figure containing much novelty, if nothing else—'like the eagle, he will ascend, in the noon-tide blaze, to the loftiest regions of existence, and look in, with unwinking eyes, on the astonished sun—the laborious dispenser of light, heat, vigour, and fertility; or, like the bat, he will feel his way, and penetrate to the utmost boundary of the mysteries and sublimities of night!'

"Dr. Miste was cordially thanked for his communication, and entreated to make some investigations respecting 'old night;' he having, as yet, confined his attention to the elucidation of 'chaos.'"

It is evident (whatever the orator and his auditors may have thought) that the poor Doctor was flying off at a tangent from the sphere of common sense. A man who goes "right a-head" without looking around and behind him for the purpose

of acquiring knowledge and regulating his decisions, is almost sure to be wrong. Such an onward course may be an evidence of sincerity, but sincerity is not necessarily a companion of truth.

I have no doubt that many of my readers will conclude, that investigations into the origin of "chaos and old night" are not a whit more absurd than researches into the chaotic and dark materials of very early ancestry. The only method of arriving at both is conjecture. The absence of stones for the building is compensated by the introduction of rubbish. Possibilities, probabilities, plausibilities, are, in the magical alembick of a genealogist, converted into realities. Imaginary persons start out, endowed with imaginary names and qualities, and surrounded with imaginary incidents. As the passer-by cares nothing about the matter, and, of course, does not trouble himself to investigate it, the fiction becomes an established fact.

CHAPTER III.

Some varieties of Hobbies.

BEING happily free from fog, chaos, &c., we may look with microscopic eyes on ourselves, or telescopic on others. We will begin with the latter. Our lively neighbours, the French, are extremely fond of hobbies. War, fêtes, fashion, anything to be gazed on and admired. They would, undoubtedly, prefer the brilliancy of a thunder-storm to the calm, silvery twilight of a summer's evening. One blood (though not, perhaps, thorough-bred) hobby carried them, some years since, into the very jaws of destruction; and they are still too much inclined to be charmed by the empty sounds of *gloire*, *Grand Empire*, &c. Thus, while fascinated with the glitter of tinsel, they are liable to overlook solid and permanent advantages.

Fashion may boast of a legion of hobbies. There are fashions of speech, of etiquette, and of

dress. The first two are found in every isolated class of society. We may sometimes discover a man's engagement or rank by his manners and phraseology. If there be an affectation of something belonging to another class, the performer is, so far, a hypocrite ; and, at first, we can scarcely tell what he is, though we know he is not genuine.

Fashions of dress are, in some instances, very grotesque. For instance, the Chinese hobby of crippling one half of the empire, and making them as weak in the lower understandings as, by a perverse education, they are in the upper,—the Turkish hobby of rolling themselves in linen like mummies. We may look, also, at the fashionable hobbies of our own country a century or two since. The embedding of the hair in flour-paste, the contraction of the waist to almost nothing, and the enlargement of the skirt to that of a great parachute. Men, too, appeared (so gaudy were they) as if printed in colours by the patent process, and then garnished with frills—as good housewives dish up a ham. Afterwards the hobby for ladies was slim and long : a wondrous and, indeed, a cumbrous train. In those times, of course, they were not “go-a-head” people. They were, of necessity, calm and stately. What a contrast between then and recently, when every lady was in a *bussel* !

We have seen, also, a lively, frisky variety—the

Bloomer hobby. This, after caracoling a little, showing its paces and fine shape, made an unfortunate trip, went down, lost character, and has scarcely been heard of since.

A friend of mine, a college-chum, an intelligent but nervous man, was sadly alarmed at the expected reversal of the order of dress and the sexes. In the midst of his excitement he wrote the following letter:—

“MY DEAR SIR,—My object in writing at this early hour is that I may warn you, as you sit down at the breakfast-table with an empty stomach and clear head, of the terrific evils with which we, as a sex, are threatened.

“I know that some will say, ‘It is all fudge. Soft and beguiling speeches, accompanied with blushes in trowsers, will never produce much effect. The source of the whole is “Yankee go-a-headism,” consequently this extravagance will soon die, and indeed is already dying, if we may so say, before it has begun to live.’ This, I am sure, is a false prophecy. Do not listen to such declamation, but open your ears while I tell you the truth.

“I may observe that, only yesterday, I came suddenly on my cook, who was writing something which she seemed anxious to conceal. Her anxiety produced a corresponding one (if I may so term it, being of an opposite kind) in me, and by mere

chance, I had an opportunity of seeing it. My dear sir! she was writing poetry, and here is an epigram which she had just cooked:—

‘ Sometimes, I guess, I’m in a humour
To doff my coats, and be a Bloomer;
For sooth to say, my fancy itches
To wear those envied things—the breeches!’

She had been hearing a lecture at the Town-hall on the previous evening on Bloomerism;—Front seats, 6d.; back ones, 3d.

“ I understand that, afterwards, (unaware that any one had seen her poetic attempt) she became very wrathful on being twitted with the disposition to deck herself in ‘smalls.’ ‘The men,’ said she, ‘because they know that they are but the second-rate of the human family, try to scandalize our sex by saying (bless their formal tongues!) that we wish to wear the breeches! If we did, it would be only to show how much better we should look in them than they!’ This, of course, was mere pretence. The wearing of trowsers, however, and jackets, too, by the other sex, is a comparative trifle. It is merely a deviation from conventional rule, to which we might very soon become accustomed; but the outward sign is intended to indicate a thorough change in manners, habits, engagements, &c.,—in fact, that woman is to be restored to her ‘rights,’—she is to act (and this is no scandal) in all pos-

sible respects as a man—she is (from *vir*, a man, and *ago*, I act,) to be a *virago*!

“Woman is to be placed (agreeably with the theory recently propounded) morally and politically on the same footing as the other sex. She is to win and rule, not by feminine grace, but masculine power. She is to hold any office in church or state—she may do duty as a clergyman, practise as a barrister, or be consulted as a physician—she may be the commander of a regiment or a ship; and, to descend in the scale, she may be a coachman, a postboy, or a ‘tiger.’

“Doubtless, the novelty of the change will be so wondrously attractive, that no fair one will think, for some time at least, of attending to accustomed duties. Nature and universal precedent have decreed that, constitutionally, man and woman are the same. They breathe the same air; they subsist on the same kind of food; both are capable of locomotion; they have, each of them, five senses. And here let it be observed that, although the fair sex sometimes bless their ‘seven senses,’ they do, on such occasions, concoct and expend more benediction than is needed. They are gifted with similar passions and emotions. They are placed in the same relation to their offspring—for a boy or a girl is as much the child of one parent as the other. Such being the case, have we not cause to deprecate a most fearful revolution?

“ Having seen that nature has established a wonderful resemblance in the male and female; that custom, in all ages and countries, has acknowledged this physiological fact; and that the other sex, with the capability of taking the duties of man, will not be slow in availing themselves of the privilege, we come to the alarming conclusion, that the places occupied at present by woman will be left vacant! This, however, must not continue long, for it would miserably misplace the machinery of mundane matters. Man, therefore, must step into woman’s shoes, put on petticoats, &c., must learn to cook, to wash and iron, to sew and nurse! Of course, it will be rather difficult and awkward at first, but ‘use makes all things perfect.’ It would be absurd to pretend that, although women may be *viragos*—act like men, men may not be *mulieragos*—act like women. Still, sad and melancholy will it be (much need of heart-mending for so much of heart-breaking) for us males to be shut up at needle-work—tambouring, stitching, knitting, puckering, and other noble exercises of the art, or making tarts or custards! In some instances, it has been deemed disreputable for one sex to interfere with the duties of another; but that feeling, alas! will have vanished, when both shall have been put on the same footing, or one in the place of the other!

“ With much regard,” &c.

My friend, who is not unfamiliar with logic, might have seen that the whole tendency of his case is to a *reductio ad absurdum*. We do, however, very often step on the edge of truth, (if I may so express it,) then pass on and bewilder ourselves in the mazes of error. There always will be wonderful speculations of a political, civil, religious, philosophical, and other kinds, which will engage the attention of mankind for a short period, and then vanish. Man influences the other sex by one means, woman by another. The former by manliness, courage, honour, courtesy: the latter by what are emphatically termed feminine virtues. The conventional duties of the one cannot be exchanged for those of the other. Such a project, being perfectly unnatural, would be succeeded by failure and contempt. No woman ever loved or honoured a man for being effeminate; and no man ever loved or honoured a woman for being masculine. The influence of the sexes on each other, though different in kind, is not very different in degree. When human beings are brutalized, brute force is the governing principle; but, when civilized, the *spirituel* overrules and subdues it. The fair sex will most effectually exercise influence (it may be said, in a qualified sense, control) over man by cultivating the feelings, graces, duties, and accomplishments of woman.

CHAPTER IV.

Two or three popular errors.

I WILL now, if the reader please, notice a few speculations on popular errors, which have recently engaged my attention. It is a common mistake to suppose, that everything is as it appears to be. If this were so, then the golden or silvery stream of light, produced by the rays of the sun or moon on the ocean, would possess a real existence, independently of the eye that looked on it. The same may be said of the rainbow, parhelia, fata morgana, and other optical phenomena. It is an error to suppose that the sun at his setting, when embedded, as it were, in fleecy clouds fringed with the brightest gold, while the surrounding heavens are dyed with varied tints—the whole scene being more gorgeous than the most brilliant dreams of Eastern romance—is really attended by this splendour; and that a person placed in the centre of

the cloudy glory would perceive anything more than—a Scotch mist. The beautiful sights of creation are relative beauties : in their relations, however, they have an actual existence. It is an error to believe that objects—flowers for instance—really possess the colours which they exhibit to us ; and hence, that a rose is red, a lily white, a primrose yellow, that grass is green, &c. The truth is, that the colours received by the eye, are totally different from the *complementary* colours retained by the objects.

It is an error to suppose that the rays of the sun are, strictly speaking, hot. The sensation of heat, of course, exists ; but it is relative. As a proof that the rays are not hot, we find that, in proportion as we ascend from vallies to hills, and from hills to the upper regions of the air, the temperature diminishes. Rays of light, too, instead of coming from the sun, are probably produced by the vibratory motion of particles in our atmosphere ; and, in proportion as we ascended to rarer air, not only heat, but light, would decrease, until, perhaps, we should arrive at a region intensely cold, and to our vision, in its present condition, perfectly dark. There is no direct communication from sonorous bodies to our organs of hearing. What affects the latter is merely the agitation of the air in the immediate vicinity of the sense. And, in respect of the

vision, we do not actually behold dwellings and fields enamelled with flowers, and groves, and the ocean, and distant ranges of hills and mountains, on which the bright blue vault of heaven appears to rest, and the sun gloriously lighting up the stirring world, or the moon silvering the sleeping earth. The truth is, that we have no *immediate* connexion with the things which we seem to behold. Something, we scarcely know what, or in what way, affects the organs of vision, and, through these, communicates with the sensorium—the audience-chamber of the mind. Every eye, if sound and perfect, is, of course, formed after one model; the atmosphere is uniform in its character, and so, also, is light: consequently, with a union of similar agents, all persons receive similar impressions, and possess corresponding conceptions of form, colour, and other qualities of created things.

It is a mistake to suppose that deep darkness requires a proportionably strong light in order that it may be dispelled. The truth is, that a small taper will dispel the gloom of a dungeon, whereas the same feeble luminary would scarcely be seen in the twilight.

A shadow is not simply the negation of light; for, if there were no light, there would be, not universal shadow, but no shadow at all. A shadow is darkness of a certain form. It cor-

responds, in the outline, with the non-illuminated parts of a substance. The shaded side is not, strictly speaking, a shadow, but a shadow is, as it were, a reflection of that shade.

I do not mean to philosophize on this dark subject. If any one "sees his way clear" to do so, he may take it in hand. I would merely look at two or three sentences, relating to shadows, which have been employed for the purpose of mental illumination. We cannot, one would think, extract light from anything so dark, any more than nectar from limestone; and yet, the phrase to "shadow forth" (to illustrate, &c.) is frequently used. The shady parts of substances, as well as those of paintings, set out the form of things; but, as shadow cannot produce light, while light will produce shadow, the expression "to shadow forth" is not so correct as to "lighten forth."

"The shadows of evening" is such a poetical phrase that it is almost a pity to touch it; but, though it is true that *sol crescentes decedens duplicat umbras*, we must remember that the shadows of evening are not deeper than those of the morning; and, as evening advances, they cease to exist, for they become blended, or buried in darkness.

"As evening advances," is a curious expression, though frequently used. Evening does not

advance or recede. Indeed, time never advances. Minutes or hours may be reckoned as so many links added to the chain ; but minutes and hours do not move ; they "bide their time," and cease to be. We, moving onward, contemporaneously with the newly-made links, advance towards midnight, and it is only in this sense that we can use the word advance.

"Coming events cast their shadows before ;"

which would imply that "coming events" approach us in the morning from the east, in the evening from the west ; in which instances only, the shadows would precede the substance. May not "coming events" be visible at noon, when, as Shakespeare says, "the shadow which is trodden on" would bear them company ?

One would fancy—judging literally—that a shadow had a fatiguing duty to perform, for "a shadow rested" is very familiar to us. Agreeably with this rule we should infer that, when a substance was stationary, the shadow would enjoy repose. It ought, of course, to be remembered that a substance frequently moves for its own pleasure, but a shadow never does.

When a man becomes so slender that (hyperbolically speaking) he casts no shadow, he is himself, very singularly, "a mere shadow."

To "take the shadow for the substance" is not

at all to be feared ; but to take a reflection for a substance is an error into which we may fall. The dog that (agreeably with the fable), in crossing a piece of water, parted with his meat to snap at what was more tempting beneath him, because he had a better view of it, acted naturally. But no dog, running on the ground, would loosen his hold of the reality to snap at the shadow. Birds will fly towards a mirror to peck at the reflection of grapes ; but not to a wall to peck at the shadow of grapes.

These two or three small investigations would seem to show that, in endeavouring to discover light in shadows, men have been groping in the dark ; and, as *ex nihilo nihil fit*, so nothing can be made out of a negation.

The outline of a substance is generally supposed to be definite ; and yet, in reality, nothing is more indefinite. If, by the term, we mean apparent form, then the outline varies with every aspect. For instance, if a statue were exposed to the view of a multitude—the short, the tall, and those of middle-height, persons on the right hand, the left, and in the centre, those who were near, at a distance, and in the intermediate spaces, would, every one, possess a different view, or, in other words, the statue would exhibit so many different outlines.

It is a mistake to conclude that there are but two sides to a question—the right and the wrong ;

whereas, most subjects are polygons—they have many sides.

It is quite an error to infer that a thing must be true because a man sincerely believes it. The converse proposition, that a thing, being true, ought to be believed, is a very different matter. The former notion has been the source of almost all the blundering, bigotry, bitterness, &c. which have disgraced and afflicted society since the world began. If there be ten or twenty theories on any obscure subject, and the minds of the patrons be tinged with obstinacy, they will struggle, and even sacrifice—if they can—the lives of their opponents in honour of the true (*i. e.* their) system. It may happen that the theories, ranged in the order of their birth, would not exhibit marks of truth until we arrived at the nineteenth or twentieth; or, it might happen that the twenty-first, *if there*, would be the right one; but, being absent, what a dust is stirred up about nothing!

It is a mistake to suppose that a man has one rib less than a woman. The truth is, that, if married, he has (to speak familiarly), one rib more. He has ordinarily, twelve pairs—the same number, of course, on each side—except his wife be hanging on his arm, and then he has thirteen ribs on one side and twelve on the other. Ribs (so anatomists tell us) are divided into true and false—seven pairs of the former and five of

the latter. This, however, is no parallel for those who are *figuratively* termed ribs, for these, undoubtedly, are generally *true*.

It is an error to imagine that a quadruped has necessarily four legs. Now a sheep, deprived of life, as every one knows, is a dead *quadruped*, yet it has but *two* legs. Four feet, therefore, do not imply four legs, neither do four legs indicate four feet; for the monkey is *quadrumanus*, consequently it has no feet at all.

It is a mistake to suppose that the going "head over heels" down stairs is attended with any danger. The only danger is in going *heels over head*.

CHAPTER V.

A popular error, with a corrective illustration.

MY readers are aware that if things be similar, they must disagree ; for, if they did not differ they would be not similar, but the same. Now, I wish for my chapters to be similar, and for this end, they must be somewhat unlike, consequently, I have turned my attention to a new subject. I am sure I shall not offend the honest pride or patriotism of any one by intimating, that it is quite a mistake to suppose that our countrymen are superior in personal appearance, intellect, morals, courage, strength, and everything else, to the inhabitants of every other region on the face of the earth. Prejudice sometimes prevents us from seeing the merits of others, and occasions us to fancy all kinds of evil, where none or very little exists ; while, by the same means, others are blind to our virtues, and open-eyed to our supposed defects. An instance of the latter has been furnished by —.

But it is of little consequence how the document was obtained. One thing is certain, that many years since, any other people, as well as the growers of tea and pigtails, would have been prejudiced against us by such plausible malevolence. On looking over it, I perceive that two or three expressions (perhaps unavoidably) are less delicately moulded than I should have wished; but if I give it, I must as it is.

“ A portion of the evidence of William Wycomb, a private in the British army, who deserted his regiment, and having made a friend of the Viceroy of the province, was conveyed to the capital of the Celestial Empire, and examined by the aid of an interpreter, before Ching-Chang-Chung, a mandarin of the first class, touching the character and habits of the barbarians. An inquiry as to the vice of cannibalism.

“ ‘ His Imperial Majesty, the great father of his people, is pleased with the answers which you have given on previous occasions, and commands me to inform you that he will testify his pleasure by some signal favour. The barbarians are so utterly inhuman that, without doubt, you were glad to escape from among them.’

“ ‘ Yes.’

“ ‘ You have related many particulars respecting the practices of these people. I wish to be informed whether, as we have heard, they actually devour one another ?’

“ ‘ In some instances, they certainly do.’

“ On hearing this, Ching-Chang-Chung became pale with horror, and one of the secretaries so dreadfully nervous, that he was obliged to leave the hall of audience.

“ ‘ We may well term them ‘ Barbarians,’ if they practise such dreadful vices! Have you ever tasted human flesh?’

“ ‘ I am not aware that I have. But there are human joints to be had as well as joints of beef and mutton.’

“ ‘ Horrible! What makes you think so?’

“ ‘ I have heard people talk about it.’

“ ‘ Who? When? What have they said?’

“ ‘ I have heard a person, when he has been in want of it, say, ‘ Give me a leg,’ ‘ Give me an arm,’ meaning a human leg and arm.’

“ ‘ Very dreadful.’

“ ‘ I have also heard them, as I suppose, making bargains among themselves, saying, ‘ Give me your hand,’ ‘ Give me your eyes,’ ‘ Give me your brains,’ ‘ Give me your head.’”

“ ‘ And do you think that they really bargain for what is so precious and invaluable?’

“ ‘ I think they do. Many a person possesses quite a ravenous appetite, especially if the object, for which he licks his lips, be tender and attractive.’

“ ‘ Alas! alas! that we ever entered into any

connexion with such barbarians! Why, they will eat us!!'

"Ching-Chang-Chung here gave a ghastly gape, as if he had lost and could not recover his breath. In fact, he did expire,—I do not mean that he died; but he expired and inspired a few times, and became comparatively tranquil, when he requested the witness to go on.

"'I have known a man, in writing to an estimable and pretty young lady, say, 'I could devour you.'"

"'O! the villain! But she would never yield to his jaw?'

"'I have known many persons use their jaw on each other.'

"On this Ching-Chang-Chung turned to the secretary, who had nerve enough to remain, and said, 'Mark that particularly, he has known them to use their jaw on one another.'

"'Are you aware that any have been killed at such times?'

"'I am not, but they have been injured.'

"The mandarin paraphrased the reply, by saying 'Much maimed and disfigured.'

"'You, yourself, have escaped from the ravenous jaws of the man-eaters; but you must have lived, generally, in great terror. I wonder not at your eagerness in flying from those barbarians to the regions of civilization and humanity.'

“ ‘I have been fortunate in some respects. I have never been deprived of a limb, but I have, in my intercourse with them, been ‘bitten’; and on two or three occasions, although not swallowed, I have had a ‘licking.’

“ ‘Very dreadful ! You may be thankful that you escaped.’ Then he said to the secretary, ‘Write that he was licked all over preparatory to being swallowed, but was miraculously preserved.’

“ ‘You have never, you say, seen a person eaten, but your evidence proves, clearly enough, that people have been devoured. Indeed, the expression, ‘I could devour you,’ or ‘I could eat you,’ implies, not only a vicious desire, but an expectation or a hope of being gratified.’

“ ‘I have known such expressions as this applied to innocent babes, ‘I could devour you with kisses.’

“ ‘The epicures ! The gluttons ! That is kiss and bite until the tender human frame, skilfully created by the Great Architect, and consisting, in part, of muscles, of fatty matter, and skin, the latter delicately painted by the same hand, were reduced to a bloody skeleton ! Do you conclude that the victims are generally eaten raw ?’

“ ‘I think not, for I have heard frequently of people in a ‘stew.’

“ ‘Very horrible ! Is that the only mode of cooking them ?’

“ ‘ People are dressed sometimes in one way and sometimes in another. I have often heard of people having a ‘dressing.’ On some occasions they are ‘roasted,’ on others ‘half baked.’

“ ‘ What ! put into ovens ?

“ ‘ Yes, ‘put in with the loaves, and taken out with the cakes.’

“ ‘ The cruel creatures ! Do they ever fry them ?

“ ‘ Yes, sometimes.’

“ ‘ Why do you think so ?

“ ‘ Because I have heard of persons who have jumped ‘out of the frying-pan into the fire.’

“ ‘ Horrible ! indeed, this is horrible ! Do these wretches ever boil any of their fellow-creatures ?

“ ‘ Yes, I believe, in Ireland.’

“ Ireland ? That’s in Asia, is it not ?

“ ‘ It’s near Great Britain, and belongs to the Queen of England.’

“ On this, the mandarin said to his secretaries, ‘ In an estate belonging to the Queen of the Barbarians, the wretched beings boil their fellow-creatures.’

“ ‘ What makes you think so ?

“ ‘ I have heard the people exclaim, ‘ O ! the broth of a boy !’

“ The monsters ! Then it seems that they boil them for the soup ! And respecting which

beverage, I should think, from the eagerness of the exclamation, they were excessively, I may say ferociously fond. What a dreadful state of things! I wonder that one person is not afraid to be in the company of another ; or that, when in the dark, he is not scared with visions of human joints, dishes of steaks, or boilers of broth !

“Just then a messenger arrived from his celestial Majesty, the ‘sole governor of the earth,’ and the examination was closed.”

I may observe how easy it is for plausible malevolence to set families, neighbours, and even nations, “by the ears,” not only by uttering direct falsehood, but by speaking a part only of the truth, or by giving to truth a new or a false aspect.

CHAPTER VI.

Misanthropy.

It will be admitted that it is impolitic, indeed criminal, to foment hatred and malevolence among nations ; but it is, most certainly, silly as well as impolitic for an individual to cherish feelings of this sort towards mankind. Does any one, however, really hate his fellow-creatures ? And, if so, is the fault in them or him ? If the latter, it is absurd to hate what is without because of what is within. If the defect of which he complains is a characteristic of the human family, wherein do others differ from himself ? The disposition cannot be caused by the inferiority of the rest of mankind, for this would occasion any feeling but hatred. Besides, it is not likely that a misanthrope would be so high in society as to be able to look down on any considerable number of his fellow-men ; nor would it be produced by the moral or intellectual superiority of others. It is not

possible for a sane man to condemn mental worth ; or, indeed, any quality that rises heaven-ward : while, on the other hand, he cannot love what has a downward tendency. The most abandoned wretch does not censure any one for possessing honour, courage, or merit of any other sort ; but, vicious as he is (and a most unwitting thing it is for vice to condemn itself !) he censures others for real or imaginary demerit. If a man professes to hate any one superior to himself, he distorts the character of that person—he paints a caricature of him, he eclipses his merit with real or pretended defects, his moral and mental worth with puerilities. Envy is frequently the parent of misanthropy ; and, indeed, a hater and despiser of his fellow-men had need to look to himself ; for a dispassionate judge would be likely to decide that mental imbecility or moral depravity would be the most suitable soil for the growth of misanthropy.

It may, however, be said—"Men are very imperfect, and it is natural for an observer to despise and hate those who practise inconsistency and folly." The observer is imperfect also ; and, perhaps, may (if not in that way, in some other) exhibit a great deal of what he condemns. Besides, everything created is imperfect. If we go from the lowest sentient beings to the highest intelligences—from a creature with partially-developed

senses, dwelling in a nook of a dark cavern, to the most exalted created being, abiding in the midst of spiritual sublimities—whose mighty powers comprehend the (apparently, to us) boundless universe—we should find that all are, and must be, defective ; that even the latter is liable to think erroneously. A person, therefore, who would despise mankind for being imperfect, may despise himself for the same reason ; indeed, by this rule, every one might despise every other—a most consistent and desirable state of things !

Or, it may be said, “ There is so much vice in the world, that a considerate person will naturally be disgusted with it.” Even if this were a true picture of mankind generally, it would not, in a well-regulated mind, excite so much of hatred as of pity. But the character of man has been exaggerated : he has been represented as a god and as a brute. Man possesses many noble qualities—much of honour and virtue ; but he is subject occasionally to base and malignant passions. His own light deepens his shadows ; and the merits of some persons cast the demerits of others into deeper shade. Man, like external nature, is in some aspects calm, beautiful, or even brilliant ; in others dark and tempestuous. Charity, however, greatly diminishes the amount of apparent demerit, while hatred, in a similar proportion, increases it. Charity reflects some of its virtue on

what it contemplates (the sun, so to speak, can never see darkness), whereas hatred blackens what it beholds. Both look at the outward man, at his acts ; but, as actions are dependent for their moral character on motives, each one looks within himself, and determines what motives he would have possessed if he had performed the acts. By this measure he metes to others.

In some instances, misanthropy has been occasioned by real or fancied injustice. The disposition of the person may have been good, but by this means made morbid ; or a naturally bad disposition made worse. If the wrong were merely conjectural, there would be no excuse for the feeling of resentment ; because truth may generally be discovered by investigation. But if the injury were real, it was not perpetrated by *all* the world, nor would all or many justify the act. Men generally are so much influenced by principles of justice that, unless private interest interfere, (and this is not always a bias) they will sanction nothing inconsistent with these principles. Why, then, should the world be condemned for the acts of a few ?

To say the least of it, the disposition to despise and hate our fellow-men is extremely impolitic. Can the feeling be indulged without exciting scorn and hatred in return ? Certainly not, in respect of many ; while esteem would be forfeited

in respect of all. It is, surely, an unequal contest for a man to set himself up against the world ! He would soon become tired of the conflict and himself. Let us look steadily at the truth, and freely confess it—we are imperfect. The policy of the misanthrope itself is a demonstration of the fact. Instead of tearing open the defects of human nature, and exposing them to the scorn and hatred of beholders (the censurers scorning and hating themselves!), let us hide them as much as possible with the mantle of charity, while we derive pleasure from contemplating what is really estimable.

CHAPTER VII.

Tom and Fred.

I HAPPEN to have two nephews, who, being smart, spirited lads, are rather fond of fun and frolic. I have always thought playfulness in boys, a sign of not only good temper, but innocence, and, if restricted to appropriate times and places, a mark of good sense. I believe, also, that the longer we preserve the innocence of early life, the longer we retain the playfulness of it. My nephews, Tom and Fred, are, what our transatlantic friends term, very "'cute." I rather encourage them in their occasional logomachies, for they sometimes fight cleverly, words being their weapons. Indeed, I do not know that such exercises may not be useful occasionally, even for adults. Nothing exhibits the varied and shifting signification of words so much as a playful turning and handling of those things in all directions. It is, of course, on a critical

knowledge of words that a vast deal of intellectual skill depends. Here is a specimen of Tom and Fred's contests:—

“How are you, Tom, to-day?”

“Because I have been *Tom* almost ever since I was born.”

“But how are you, I mean?”

“How am I? How can I tell? I am, I suppose, because I am. What does that great philosopher, Des Cartes, say? *Ego cogito, ergo sum.*”

“How is your health?”

“Health of what?”

“Health of body.”

“In what part?”

“Your general health.”

“How is it—in itself, or in relation to me?”

“Are you in good health?”

“I am not *in* good health. The health that I have is in me.”

“Is your health then good?”

“Of course, what I have is good. But *good* health is like living life or moving motion.”

“Do you think that health, in your case, preponderates over disease?”

“In the first place, I did not happen to be thinking in that particular way. Secondly, what do you mean by my case? My chest? Thirdly, ‘preponderates.’ Do you fancy that both have

been put into scales, or hung up by steelyards, and that one has 'kicked the beam?' Fourthly, 'over.' Does the weightier thing in the balance go over or under the other?"

"I mean, have you more of health than otherwise?"

"That is, do I receive more from health than I give to her? Or, do I receive more from health than from anything else?"

"Is health an inmate of yours?"

"Certainly not; for, if she were, I must be inside myself to bear her company."

"Do you know anything about health?"

"Yes, health is in me. You, as well as various things, are about me; and, by the same rule, *about health*; and I know you."

"I mean, how do you do?"

"When I am in trouble, and want to get out of it?"

"No; how do you do in regard to health?"

"Speak well of it, give it a hearty welcome, and never suffer it to leave me if I can help it."

"I mean, are you well?"

"In mind, in body, or estate?"

"To begin, I will say 'mind.'"

"'You,' is certainly formed of the whole man, the material, the intellectual, &c. And how can the whole be in a part? How can I, the aggregate, be 'well' in 'one of my constituents?'"

"Is your body well?"

" 'Your,' is the possessive case, and what do you deem to be the possessor?"

"The mind and body, of course."

"Then the body is, in part, the possessor of itself? What part of the body is it which possesses the whole body?"

"As it seems likely that I shall not immediately obtain much information, I will wish you good morning."

"How can I have a good morning when three-fourths of it are already gone?"

CHAPTER VIII.

A Hobby of my own.

I REALLY am almost ashamed to speak of myself, or my affairs. To turn the attention of my readers to subjects which, perhaps, are beneath their attention; but I was intending to say that my favourite hobby (next after my family—for I am happy to say I am a family-man, having a very much “better half,” and seven little ones—one boy and six girls—the first being the last, and my library, for I am fond of books, and the commission which Her Majesty was pleased to bestow on me as justice of the peace; which judicious (I should say judicial) appointment will, I hope, tend, if not to my Sovereign’s honour, to my own—is, I think, the frequenting of ancient buildings, ruins, &c. Yesterday I visited the ancient castle of —, and was so deeply interested with those remains of grandeur, that I fell (if a man may fall while erect) into a walking reverie.

The warder concluded, probably, that I was rather eccentric, and left me to myself. "Many influences," I said, (for I believe it was a soliloquy,) "affect me when I look on these decaying features. When I walk through the silent halls and noiseless passages of this building, the dim shadowy mantle spread around, the light peeping among the mouldering piers, the tracery of the windows interlaced with, and supported by ivy; the decayed tapestry, the fretted sculpture, the crumbling doorways, and the ravages of time on the roof, walls, and pavement, solemnize my mind. Everything causes me to think of generations long since gone. Those who built, and carved, and painted, and wrought magnificent tapestry, have ceased to exercise their ingenious arts. This hall was the scene of mirth and revelry, of joyous laughter and music. In the courts was the marshalling of warriors, with the clangour of arms. These sounds have been hushed for generations. The armour, of which some remains exist high on the mouldy walls, and the weapons (one naturally fancies) were worn and borne by courageous and noble spirits, by men renowned in the senate and in the field. Not only lords, but ladies, enlivened and graced with their presence these ancient structures. Those who handled the spear, the shield, the falchion, who engaged in the chase, jousted at tournaments, or fought on the

battle-field, have ceased to act. Manliness, courage, beauty, and gentleness are passed away as a dream; and the mortal forms which were adorned by these qualities, have long been reduced to dust, and mingled with the neighbouring soil. The dead, though absent, seem to be present; and appear to be so in proportion as they have been separated by lapse of time. In a house which has existed but a century, one thinks not of the early tenants; but these features of venerable antiquity so affect me that I imagine the ancient tenants of the building to be actually in my company. I feel it would be irreverent to speak of them except in a whisper; and even while I am speaking, I am not free from embarrassment as to what they may think of me."

I am, however, I believe, most powerfully affected when I behold the sad and solemn remains of some ancient Christian temple. I think of not only life, but religion; not only earth, but heaven. I think of men, perhaps my own forefathers, who prayed to and praised the God whom I worship. One generation after another had, in childhood, expressed their wonder, and in manhood, their admiration of the noble structure, and bowed themselves in lowly reverence there; then, after a time, had ceased to come, but had been borne, as to a resting place, on the journey to their "long home."

Not only have multitudes been brought into the solemn shade of the temple on their passage to the grave, but many have been deposited beneath the pavement. It is, in fact, a city of vaults, and the denizens are the silent dead, unless even these have been depopulated ! The monuments, erected for the purpose of immortalizing the noble occupants, are fretted away ; and one listens in vain for some voice to echo what these memorials had, for ages, declared to the passers-by.

CHAPTER IX.

A School Ordeal.

My nephew Tom, who is beginning to form opinions on men and things, has a decided objection to the early training which is adopted by some parents and instructors of the rising generation. He says truly, that if children are very precocious, school-learning should be delayed; and if otherwise, it is, at a very early age, almost useless. Indeed, generally speaking, precocious children die, or cease to be extraordinary; while, on the other hand, men eminent for literature and science were, very frequently, in childhood, anything but intellectual. I am aware that there is a great disposition to exhibit prodigies—children to be talked of and wondered at; to cram them with food which they cannot digest; to make them familiar with words, while they are ignorant of things. All this may be, in some respects, natural; but it is very impolitic. My nephew

has sent me a sketch of a monthly school-examination, which, professedly, took place in the educational apartment of the village school-mistress of ——. It appears to be what is termed an infant-school; but, whether it be a fancy sketch, or a representation of what actually occurred, I will not undertake to say.

“Now, my dears, stand up in a row. How many parts of speech are there?”

No. 1. “I don’t know.”

No. 2. “I can tell. There be three.”

“There are more than that, child.”

No. 3. “There be eight.”

“That’s right, my dear! What are they?”

No. 3. “I can’t tell all. There be preparation and interposition. I can’t tell any more.”

No. 4. “I think there be two—the first and the last.”

“My dears! I told you there are eight. We must go to something else. How many genders are there?”

No. 2. “I never learnt genders.”

“Genders of nouns, my dear!”

No. 2. “I think you mean ganders!”

“No, no! Don’t you know there are three?”

No. 4. “I know. Masking, feoline, and peuter.”

“Speak plain, my dear. Why is it called masculine?”

No. 1. "Because it is, ma'am!"

"No, no! What is the reason?"

No. 2. "I never learnt that."

"What, then, is called feminine? What is called she?"

No. 6. "Our Tom is called she."

"Yes, my dear, the cat. A Tom-cat is always feminine.* Now, we will go to something else. How old is the world?"

No. 1. "Three-score years and ten."

"No, no! that's the age of man."

No. 6. "Man—that's father. Won't mother live so long as father?"

"Yes, I hope: but I want to know the age of the world."

No. 5. "The parson will tell you."

"You must understand, my dears, that when I ask a question of you, it is not because I wish to know; for years and years ago—even before your mothers were born—I was fully instructed in all that could be taught or learnt. My honoured father was a schoolmaster of high repute, and supposed to know more than any other man in the parish, or, indeed, in any place. And I have heard him say, many times, that soon he should have to go to his daughter to be taught. The parson himself, my dears, comes to me for infor-

* This must be a peculiarity of the district.

mation on many matters with which I am, but he is not, acquainted. I ask questions of you merely for the purpose of seeing whether you have learnt your lessons, and remembered what you learnt."

No. 5. "Hau!"

"Now tell me, how old is the world?"

No. 8. "A fousand years and a day."

"You are quite wrong; and, besides, you don't speak plain. It is six thousand years old."

No. 6. "My eye!"

"What shape is the world?"

No. 3. "It is four-square, within and without."

"No, no; you are quite incorrect."

No. 1. "World, world—let me see. It is, I think, a concave."

"No, my dear. What is the opposite of concave?"

No. 1. "Vexity."

"Convex, it is. It is round—a globe. What is the equinoctial line?"

No. 7. "What they do hang clothes upon."

No. 2. "A ship of the line."

No. 1. "I think it is a line that do stop the ships."

"No, my dears! It is a line drawn all round the world. The ships can go over it."

No. 6. "What a lot of cord!"

"No, child. It is not real, but figurative; not tangible, but intangible."

No. 6. "Hau!"

"What are the stars?"

No. 3. "There be seven stars up to Mr. Boniface's."

"I mean the stars in the sky."

No. 3. "I was never up in the sky."

"But, child, have I not told you that they are suns, and that planetary bodies revolve about them?"

No. 3. "I never heard of those bodies."

"Yes, I have told you."

No. 2. "May anybody resolve about them?"

"No, child. The planets are not sentient beings as we are; but they move in accordance with certain laws."

No. 1. "Yes, ma'am."

"What is the moon?"

No. 8. (In great haste.) "It is, ma'am, a man's head up in the sky."

"Not a man's head, but a world."

No. 2. "A man's world?"

"No; man has nothing to do with it."

No. 1. "It do give light to man."

"Yes, my dear, very true—a very sensible remark. What are the poles of the earth?"

No. 8. "The poles be great sticks."

"No, no! You are quite wrong."

No. 5. "Please, ma'am, No. 6 is kicking me."

"For shame! No. 6, I shall turn you out. The

poles are the terminations of a line which passes through the earth, and is called the axis of the earth."

No. 4. "How do they get the line through?"

"It is not a real, but an imaginary line; one end of which is at the north, and the other the south."

No. 1. "Yes, ma'am."

"What is a mountain?"

No. 5. "The mountain is what skipped like rams."

No. 8. "The mountain is where the great 'big man of the mountain' lives."

"A mountain is a very high place."

No. 7. "Then a mountain is up with the stars."

"No, no; not so high as that. A mountain is a lofty prominence on the earth's surface. What is a stream?"

No. 4. "What comes out of a tea-kettle."

No. 6. "A stream is what we do wash our things in."

"The reply of No. 6 is quite correct. But some streams are much larger than that. What is the sea?"

No. 2. "The sea is made out of dry land."

No. 5. "It is separate from dry land."

No. 8. "It is a great place that do go up to the sky."

"Yes, my dear, but that is only apparently so. Of what does it consist?"

No. 4. "Of oceans upon oceans of water."

"Quite right. What are the tides?"

No. 1. "That's when we have holidays."

"No, no! They consist of certain movements in the ocean, which are occasioned by the influence of gravitation."

No. 1. "Yes, ma'am."

"What is physical science?"

No. 8. "That's what mother do have from the doctor."

"It is put up in bottles."

No. 3. "It is very nasty. I was forced to take some when I was bad."

No. 7. "Mother do have plenty from the club."

"Children, you mistake me. Physical science includes the phenomena of the visible and tangible creation, and——"

No. 1. "Yes, ma'am."

CHAPTER X.

Some more about Hobbies.

INSTEAD of amusing ourselves with the perplexities of little folks—the first efforts, the wear and tear, of juvenile intellects—we will look at the amusements of great ones ; and bring before us a file of hobby-horses. First, we have a fast and frolicsome variety—sporting hobbies ; indeed these include a multitude of sub-varieties. There is the hunting hobby, of great strength and activity, flying over hills and springing over ditches, carrying an eager and joyous burden, amidst the cracking of whips, the yelping of dogs, and the shouts of men !

It is difficult to paint the shooting hobby ; but we may say that, although nags generally are timid of smoke, fire, and sudden explosions, this animal delights in them. I need scarcely say that the inhabitants of groves and forests possess an instinctive dread of this hobby ; which proves that

there is a great diversity of tastes in the world, and suggests a new and improved reading of a passage in Cowper. Of the pheasant, the poet says it retires to some

—— “far-sequestered green,
And shines without desiring to be seen!”

Instead of this we may read —

—— far-sequestered spot,
And shines without desiring to be shot.

In the next place, we have the fishing hobby, and a variety of it termed angling, of which old Izaak Walton says—

“Other joys
Are but toys;
Only this
Lawful is,
For our skill
Breeds no ill,
But content and pleasure.”

Worthy Izaak seemed to have had, occasionally, but a partial view of things. His joy in writing the “Life of Bishop Sanderson” was nothing compared with angling; for this only “lawful is:” hence, he might angle on, and hope, very consistently, to have, as he says—

“A quiet passage to a welcome grave.”

Gentle Izaak observes—

“Our skill
Breeds no ill,
But content and pleasure.”


This may be judged from not only the countenance of the angler, but the evident delight of the worm, which, full of hilarity, dances in the crystal waters, as if it knew not what to make of itself. Who shall decide when doctors disagree? It has been said of the angler's weapon, that it is a rod with a worm at one end and a fool at the other! If “other joys are but toys,” what toys other joys must be! Byron is rather severe on Walton and his hobby—

———“Angling, too, that solitary vice,
Whatever Izaak Walton sings or says;
The quaint, old, cruel coxcomb, in his gullet
Should have a hook, and a small trout to pull it.”

But Izaak was not cruel, though he was eccentric.

Hawking and falconry are hobbies little patronised in the present day. There was a time, however, when sovereign and peasant, abbot and monk, lady and lady's-maid, forsook the sceptre, plough, missal, and distaff to join in those airy sports.

Then we have horse-racing, and a variety of it termed steeple-chasing. Many fine horses, however, are sacrificed in the latter sport—as many, sometimes, as in a bull-fight. And not the least evil connected with it is the mania for betting.



The last word reminds me of the gambling hobby—a steed which is “stone-blind,” urged onwards, sometimes, by a desperate rider. The result frequently is, that the blind being guided by one who can’t see, they both go into a ditch, or over the edge of a precipice.

Boating, cricket, and kindred sports are healthy engagements. With these, as with every other good, evil arises only from abuse. Of chess, backgammon, and sundry similar games, it may be said, they are useful as occasional recreations; when elected as hobbies, they check the growth of useful acquirements; unless, indeed, the soil of the mind of be adapted for nothing else.

Public amusements of all kinds should be estimated as rest after labour, recreation from toil, indulgence after self-denial. They are very unprofitable and unsatisfactory hobbies. It is like leaving dinner for dessert, or solid food for mere condiments.

CHAPTER XI.

A Bit and a Drop.

THERE must be, one would think, a great deal in a little (on the homœopathic principle), for verbal diminutives, now-a-day, are made to exert great power. On this account one is not surprised at the increased patronage which has been bestowed on the words *bit* and *drop*; and, having a bit of spare time, I will, with the reader's permission, allow my attention to drop on this subject. The truth is that all the magnitudes seem to be dwindling into parvitudes; and, instead of appearing double, as they did formerly, to those persevering and thirsty souls—or rather bodies—who were “half sewn up” and “half seas over,” incapable not of “crossing the line,” but of progressing parallel with it, they are now arrived at the next door to nothing;—(where nothing resides we are not told). Formerly there were “boundless stores,” “rivers,” and “oceans” of the good and

desirable things of life, but now they are reduced to bits and drops ! Even our goose-quills into crows, and nothing to crow about. The mighty engine for uprearing or upsetting a sovereign dynasty is now a diminutive steel-pen ! A *bit* of news, a *bit* of advice, a *bit* of good tidings, is all that we can procure. A *bit* of mutton for dinner, and a *drop* of wine must satisfy an ordinary appetite ; and even on particular occasions there are only tit-bits.

We are so fond of these diminutives, that a man will "*drop* in after a *bit*," and a rogue, having been *bit*, is rewarded with a *drop*. We give a *bit* to a horse to prevent a *drop* ; whereas a *bit* of fatigue to a feeble man occasions a *drop*. An anti-teetotaler is fond of a *drop*, (perhaps he is only a "little-drop man,") and when the world runs round, in obedience to an ancient law, and he, with elbows sticking out, knees oscillating, and head (not, as Ovid says, "*Os homini sublime dedit.*" &c., but) prone, having on the lower side of it a sweet intelligent face—the whole proving that the centre of gravity, in respect of him, is transitional, and the by-standers have no gravity left—then all this is because he has merely taken a *drop* too much !

But it will not do to go through the details of the diminutive system, bit by bit, or drop by drop, for it would occasion a good *bit* of time ; and, therefore, we will let it *drop*.

I am reminded of a communication from a rather eccentric friend, which relates to something different from what we have been looking at, and yet, in some respects, the same. "I was standing, not long since, in the midst of a crowd, and could scarcely help observing the varied stature of those about me. The smallest person of a score, or thereabouts, who came within the cognizance of my ocular powers, and the jurisdiction of my mental ones, appeared to be a shapely, likely, suitable piece of human composition ; and I could scarcely help exclaiming (that is, inwardly)—'What's the use of having people bigger than that?' Now, a horizontal plane which would have impinged on the 'thatch' of this gentleman's 'roof,' would have cut off half a head from one of the group, a whole head from another, a head and shoulders from another, &c. I calculated that there were shoulders, heads, and half-heads enough to make up three human beings ! Of what use, thought I, is this waste of the most precious commodity on earth—Christian flesh ? Now, you will bear in mind that what I have said relates to height only ; but if bulk be taken into the account also, I am sure that, among the twenty persons, we should have found enough material for five-and-twenty human beings !—and, I will venture to say, beings of a more compact, sizeable, symmetrical, and every way more acceptable character.

This, then, is a most interesting and important subject. Human happiness might be increased to an amount one-fourth greater than at present. The enjoyment of life does not depend on bulk: Daniel Lambert or Goliath was not so blithe, nimble, and frisky as many a man of reasonable size. The flesh may overcome the spirit—may, indeed, almost smother it—owing to the ‘outer man’ being too bulky for the ‘inner man.’ Doubtless, all souls are equal—as exact, one to another, as sovereigns newly issued from the mint; but when they are ‘top-hampered’ with flesh and blood, they cannot lift themselves up—they cannot expand and exercise their mighty powers. Thus we find (though it be a paradox) that the smallest men have been the greatest. I need scarcely point out the warriors, legislators, philosophers, poets, philanthropists, &c., &c., which, though small, were great, because the number that presents itself to my mind’s eye is ‘legion,’ and because my readers will readily call to mind illustrations numberless. Besides, common consent, expressed in common language, confirms my statement. Who ever heard of a ‘clever *big* man?’ But who has not heard of a ‘clever little man?’ He is a ‘worthy little man,’ a ‘nice little man,’ an ‘excellent little man;’—these are expressions of every day’s and every hour’s discourse. But substitute big or great for little, and it will

be seen in a moment, that the phraseology becomes unnatural; indeed, that as language is the expression of things, there are no such things to be expressed.

“ Without discoursing further on this subject, it will, I hope, appear most desirable that the sum-total of human material should be divided into smaller quantities; and then we should have, not only a larger portion of happiness, but an incalculably greater amount of moral, intellectual, and all other commendable and ennobling qualities!”

I must observe that it seems probable the foregoing article was penned in, or inspired by, an undue feeling of partiality for those who, like my friend, have been rather stinted by Nature in her disbursement of bones, muscles, &c. Doubtless there have been many worthy and intellectual persons who have been much *above* the ordinary standard. It is probable that very small or large may be unfavourable to the development of mind; and that intellectual excellence may be most frequently found in the *via media* of corporeal endowment.

CHAPTER XII.

Extraordinary Events, &c.

I HAPPENED to hear a person exclaim, not long since, "Surely, we live in an age of extraordinary events!" On examining the matter, however, it will probably be inferred that one age does not possess more extraordinary events than another. Of course, certain events occur in one period that do not in another. Ordinary and the opposite are relative: hence, by increasing the number of great occurrences, we lower them from the dignified class of extraordinary to that of ordinary. If the sun arose but once in the year, or the moon once in a century, that would be, of course, an extraordinary event; and so it would be if a comet, with a long and brilliant train, presented itself to our view; but, if comets were as numerous as stars, we should deem the appearance ordinary.

There are two senses in which the word extra-

ordinary may be used:—as a variation from the laws of nature, and from the ordinary course of events. A deviation from a common standard, and the amount of that deviation, are the rule for determining what is extraordinary. Thus, the customs and appearances of one age, or some of them, would be deemed very extraordinary in another. One of the ordinary Britons of two thousand years since would be very extraordinary in the present day. The shaggy animals of the frigid zones would be very extraordinary in the tropics; and the birds of sunny climes, of brilliant and glossy plumage, would be equally so in the polar regions.

In any particular age or place, *one* thing only can be *most* extraordinary, while the extraordinary will bear a proportion to the catalogue of events. Thus, there would be but one man the wisest or richest; others would take their place on the steps below, in the various orders of very wise or very rich, wise or rich, rather wise or rather rich. There would be the same gradation, whether the mass were raised or lowered. Consequently, the terms ordinary and extraordinary belong, just in the same proportion, to all ages and countries.

What I have said will apply to individuals, families, communities, or kingdoms; to days, months, years, generations, or epochs; to worlds or solar systems; in each of which there must be

one (and only one) event of the greatest and one of the least importance, as there can be only one circumference and one centre, whatever the extent of the circle may be.

An impression is, of course, distinct and powerful in proportion to its newness: hence we err in comparing present with past experience. Every violent storm is the most violent that we ever experienced. The rain is, undoubtedly, the heaviest that we ever saw. The lightning is vivid, without precedent. Such heat or cold was never before felt. So long a drought was never remembered. And then we lift our hands, and draw a long breath (unless affected by palpitation of the heart), as if some extraordinary movement should indicate the extraordinary emotions which accompany the extraordinary announcement. But probably such wind, rain, lightning, &c., have frequently happened during our lives. From a similar mistake, people often say that *these* are great and stirring times—indications of no one knows what. But the world has always been in a stirring state. Earthquakes, wars, pestilence, conflagrations, have been in all ages visiting it, and stirring up the inhabitants. The course of nature—indeed, the course of general events—is tolerably even during a long series of ages.

If, on the one hand, we fall into error from an excess of descriptive language, on the other, we

do the same from an unavoidable deficiency. In many instances, a man feels and beholds mentally more than he can describe, owing to the poverty of language. There are, for instance, some appearances of nature—magnificent scenes in which the earth, air, and heavens are arrayed in their most lovely tints—set off, as it were, to illustrate the harmony of the beautiful—which no language could paint. There are thoughts which excite emotions too great for utterance. There are mental conceptions which surpass the most graphic representations of language—conceptions of the vast, the unearthly, the spiritual, which cannot be expressed by any ordinary or extraordinary verbal symbols.

We are not always judges of the power of words when (in writing, for instance) the symbols exist in connection with our own thoughts only. To be sufficiently expressive, not only the words, but the mind receiving the words, must be adapted for, and equal to, the conception. If the reader, owing to ignorance, or a biassed education, be incapable of furnishing thoughts to agree with the received symbols, no communication, or only an imperfect one, can be produced.

Most commonly, the reason why conceptions cannot be represented, is that they are novel—they are not included in the analogies of experience. Things are beheld which cannot be named ;

abstract existences and qualities which cannot be painted in figurative language; emotions, full and powerful, but too indefinite to be expressed. Many an original thought, many a noble conception, many a brilliant, dazzling, evanescent scene has perished on its attempted introduction to the atmosphere of common life.

CHAPTER XIII.

Sayings of My Father.

My father, who was an excellent man, used to say that shining characters are those who have had a great many rubs. He gave me many a sententious monition for my guidance; and, indeed, I believe the little of merit that exists in me must be attributed to his teaching—not, however, forgetting my mother: but, as these two were one, I frequently speak of a half as the whole. The saying of my father respecting “rubs” may have been intended as an encouragement to me to put myself in the way of them.

My father was a shrewd and good economist. “Trevelyan,” said he, “always remain, if possible, on the money-side of a bargain, until you have possession of the equivalent.” I found this an excellent rule some time since, for I had (as I supposed) purchased an estate; but, loath to part with the purchase-money until I was sure that all

was right, I found a defect in the title. "People," said he, "are most liable to *bill*-ious attacks immediately after Christmas; especially if they have lived freely, and gone beyond the limits of sight—that is, have been living by faith." "In regard to pay," he observed, "there are many features of the case. People pay 'through the nose,' or pay 'up to eyes,' and then, because they have done so, they are 'down in the mouth.' Sometimes, they pay both ears, and even their head, when Justice, who has no heart, requires it to balance his accounts." "When a man gets into straits," he said, "everything appears to be crooked." As a monition to charity, he observed, "The supposed mistakes of one man originate, frequently, in the actual mistakes of another." "Never be ashamed," said he, "to acknowledge a fault. In confessing one's demerits (which is a kind of sinking) a man leaves a considerable space for rising to his ordinary level; and perhaps the pleasure of the one compensates for the irksomeness of the other. One always breathes more freely after an act of humility than of ostentation; indeed, in the latter case, a man of sensibility can scarcely breathe at all."

Sometimes my father was rather jocose. "Trevelyan," said he, "you must not suppose that magpies are the same shape as other pies. That turtle-soup is made from turtle-doves. That lunar-tables

are (dining or other) tables in the moon. That the Horse-Guards are composed entirely of horses ; or that the Royal Mews are appropriated for cats." One day, in my simplicity—being a little boy—I said (after admiring my father's black breeches and gold buckles), "Pa ! I should like to wear like that. "Smalls, my dear," said he, "are much too large until you be grown big." The word "smalls" shocked my Aunt Lucy, who was very squeamish.

One hardly likes to tell tales of one's aunt : but I may say that, some years after this occurrence, being in her library, I took down a copy of Milton's "Paradise Lost," of, I think, 1705 ; and was surprised to find that in the numerous engravings—the angels of which are exhibited in Roman costume, and our first parents as having been unacquainted with Roman customs or fashions—she had, with a good deal of skill in every instance, clothed Adam and Eve from head to foot, in the style of dress patronised by the angelic beings !

CHAPTER XIV.

My Aunt Ann.

I HAD another aunt—Ann, of whom I will, with the reader's permission, say a word or two. She was rather eccentric, but endowed with a benevolent heart. She exists as one of the portraits painted in my memory when I was a boy; for she, poor soul, has long been laid in the silent tomb. She was made up of genuine material; there was no guile in her composition. Her straight-forward honest zeal sometimes carried her to an extreme; while interest in the welfare of her fellow-creatures gave her the appearance, occasionally, of meddling with other people's matters. Her defects, such as they were, and her eccentricity, arose, I verily believe, from a cross-course in an apparently direct and pleasant road to a bower of bliss in the realms of matrimony, which took her (her own unbending purpose being the guide) into permanent celibacy. I don't think my Aunt Ann said "No" in order to

excite a disposition in the other sex to thwart her in her professed purpose ; but simply because she meant it, and though she might have been married, she was not.

As she never thought of deceiving any, she had no conception that man, nature, or anything else would deceive her. Thus, she was frequently made the patroness of chimerical schemes. She believed most persons to be honest, and, if honest, trustworthy—not allowing for human prejudice and ignorance. Whatever was said or written by worthy persons, was not uttered, she supposed, without reason ; and hence she received it. She believed that beasts were immortal, because it is said, in the *Benedicite* (she was a very strict Churchwoman), “ O, all ye beasts and cattle, bless ye the Lord, praise him and magnify him for ever ;”—exactly the same form (she would observe) as is used in the next clause—“ O, ye children of men, bless ye the Lord ; praise him and magnify him for ever.” What applied to one applied therefore to the other : and if “ for ever,” brutes of course must be immortal. She maintained, to her latest days, that the sun, and not the earth, moved ; that the stars are set in the heavens merely to give light, with many other antiquated notions.

The expression “ world without end ” puzzled her. She supposed, at first, it might mean that there were no limits to the earth. This, however,

would not harmonize with another of her notions—that the sun circled it; and, consequently, she concluded that the existence of the world would never terminate. She did not, I may observe, fall into the common error that “everlasting” means eternal, for she believed, agreeably with the formula “made and provided” by her forefathers, and adopted by her foremothers, that the earth, indeed all creation, did not begin to exist until five days before the formation of Adam. She believed, with Archbishop Usher, that the universe started into being—or, rather, began to be—at a particular hour, on a particular day, in a particular month, in the year *one*. The geological theories which, in her day, were beginning to assume a definite form, she most decidedly rejected—being, in her opinion, contrary to fact and authority; while the terms primary, secondary, tertiary, carboniferous, cretaceous, argillaceous, &c., (a catalogue, she would say, as lengthy as “to-day, and to-morrow, and every succeeding day,”) seemed calculated to bewilder weak minds, and induce them to accept what otherwise they would reject. I know not what my aunt would have said of the more recent verbal inventions of geologists—the pliocene, miocene, eocene, with the placoids, ganoids, ctenoids, cycloids, &c. There was, however, this charitable announcement with my aunt’s condemnation of scientific men, that,

although inventing and propagating false theories, they were not aware of it; but, doubtless, acted from the best of motives. If any friend, however, had invented an hypothesis, as baseless as an aërial castle or a dream, and had recommended it to her, she would, trusting in him, have embraced it. My Aunt Ann knew nothing, and professed to know nothing, of natural phenomena. Indeed, she lived ten years within sight of a vane, with the attendant capital letters E, W, N, S, to mark the cardinal points; but she never could, by looking at it, tell the direction of the wind. The paragraph to which I have referred, in the chapter of circumstances affecting my Aunt Ann—I mean her non-contamination by scientific knowledge—did not in the least affect her decision of character. She used to say that if one person knew nothing on a subject, and another a great deal—one mind, in this respect, empty, and the other full—there might be as little doubt in the former as the latter; indeed, if any difference, the former would have the advantage. In organic, or any other remains—fossils of birds, beasts, fishes, or anything else—she felt no interest. Indeed, she rejected the notion of millions of specimens treasured up for millions of years, for no “earthly purpose.” If all this had consisted of preserved meat (adapted for the poor), instead of preserved bone, she would have seen the utility of it. My Aunt Ann was an

excellent cook. No one could make tarts, jellies, plum-cake, &c., with such unerring skill as she could. She knew (as the reader by this time may judge) a vast deal more of the necessary constituents of the paste of a pie than she did of the crust of the earth. However, apart from her little prejudices against science, and her tendency to amiable errors, she was, as a relative, a neighbour, and a Christian, most worthy of imitation.

CHAPTER XV.

A Foible,

AND a prevailing one, is an anxious desire of looking into futurity. I can scarcely tell what induced me, just now, to treat of this matter: but our thoughts, like clouds, are wafted this way or that by unseen influences. The subject, however, is one which interests all. The earth, in revolving on its axis, and travelling through its orbit, measures out our days and our years. Each of the latter includes momentous results, and even our alternations of light and darkness are, perhaps, every one connected with occurrences which, immediately or remotely, are of great importance. Happily, our knowledge is confined chiefly to what is and has been; we can discern little of what will be. Hence, it might rather be said—the folly of attempting to look into futurity. The varied tissue of earthly events—the materials of which have had no existence till *now*—is rolled up as the

record of what *has been*. Consequently we can contemplate the past, but not the future. Some natural changes, of course, occur at measured intervals; and we know, most accurately, when to look for them. In regard to others, a similar result is obtained by mathematical or logical processes; but, in respect of the great majority of occurrences, we know not what a day will bring forth. The vicissitudes of a few months or weeks may exhibit us as reduced from opulence to penury, from health to sickness, from reputation to disgrace; from the possession of hope, in full bloom, basking in the rays of heaven, to a condition of despondency and darkness. Or the course of events may lie in the opposite direction.

Not only can human vision never penetrate into the dark abyss of futurity, but it is certain that the powers of every created being must be unequal to the task. If any of the higher orders of intelligence discern the things that will be, they must do so by looking, as it were, through the glass of Deity. It would be less difficult to behold two, or even twenty occurrences in various parts of the world, at the same moment, than to perceive an event of to-morrow. For, in the one case, a person would behold what existed; in the other, what had not begun to exist. Only the Divine power, that can bring something out of nothing, can behold something in nothing. If a created

being could discover the events of to-morrow, he could, with equal ease, perceive those of a week, a month, a thousand or million of years hence.

A description of actual events is, in some respects, an electrototype from a picture of the mind; but who could transfer a picture from a blank plate? who could take a daguerreotype of what will be a thousand years hence? None, surely, but that Being to whom all things are possible.

It is certain, then, that man, without Divine influence, direct or mediate—which, as spiritual euphrasy, would cleanse the mortal film from his eyes—cannot behold the future; and that this faculty is bestowed only for momentous purposes. It might naturally be imparted in reference to the government of God on earth, the destinies of kingdoms, the sublimities of eternity in connection with time; these, as they are immediately regulated by a Being to whom all ages are present, might worthily be attended by miraculous endowment—which would enable the appointed agents of the Divine Governor to behold and represent some of the events of future times; but the records of the ordinary affairs of life are a sealed book, and no one can break the seal without an especial warrant—which, however, we have no reason to believe could be obtained.

The notion that certain persons, by human art,

can pry into futurity, is extremely absurd. Such professors are mere quacks, and generally of the very lowest class, who dupe and victimise individuals who happen to be, in respect of cunning, lower than themselves. Such folly is not unfrequently the cause of delusive hope, fictitious fear, and irreparable ruin.

What we have to do is, simply to study the best conduct for the condition in which we are placed, and to act agreeably with it. To be content, and resigned to the will of our Heavenly Father. Why should we, if we could, tremblingly turn over the records of future years and read, perhaps, our sad history? Affliction, let it come when it may, will come soon enough. Why should we marshal before our horror-stricken vision a ghastly array of diseases; and behold, as on a scenic stage, one friend after another struck down by the dart of Death, and the tragic representation finished with our own seizure by the grim monster? Divine Providence has sealed our eyes in mercy. Foolish and impious is he who wishes, or attempts, to destroy this preservative of our ignorance and bliss!

CHAPTER XVI.

Foible the Second.

THERE is another subject, belonging to the same category as that of the preceding chapter, on which I may, perhaps, be allowed to say a few words—the indulgence of useless regret. Regret, we are sure, cannot alter the past; it may affect the present and the future. The latter may be useful, the former is useless. Although useless, how often is it cherished and allowed, as a venomous reptile, to poison the springs of enjoyment ! It is silly for people to distress themselves because they were born with corporeal defects ; introduced to the light in this country, or that ; raised from an ignoble stock, or a thousand other matters that cannot be altered ; and in respect of which a host of speculations, sorrows, and regrets would be perfectly futile. Yet there are some who seem to think themselves not culpable in thus wasting their time. They might, as naturally, lament

that our globe was not placed in the orbit of Venus, in the midst of a galaxy of satellites, or encircled with a luminous ring.

When regret is confined to the past, it is dark and gloomy; when connected with the present and future, rays of hope and high purposes sometimes burst through the clouds of sorrow and despondency. Regret for imprudence or misconduct checks and regulates us in our progress; preventing us from being lured into a wrong path, and inspiring us with vigour to persevere in a right one.

If, however, we have acted reasonably and conscientiously, we ought not to regret, or censure ourselves, because the results have not been satisfactory. If a person does all that he can, he is free from blame. Man is, of course, liable to be deceived; and, besides this, there is a Power high above human beings, who sometimes overturns the best-concerted schemes when inconsistent with His purposes.

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CHAPTER XVII.

Our Feelings.

To be free from unnecessary (and almost, necessary) cares, from pain and sorrow—to be happy—is the great object of our hopes and efforts. Much depends on the avoiding of what would agitate the mind and generate disease. I have just referred to two of these morbid influences. A great deal, however, arises from what is mechanical. The connection¹ of mind and body is so intimate, that any influence on the one affects the other; thus, thoughts originating from mental action or external things may elevate, invigorate, delight the mind—and, in a similar degree, affect the body. But the latter is frequently the communicator of pleasure. In addition to external sense, there is a sort of internal sense, which, on some occasions, produces indefinable delight. On such occasions, people express themselves as feeling “very comfort-

able," as being in "excellent health," in "good spirits."

Brute animals are affected in a similar manner. They frisk and play, they are happy, they know not why. Sensation urges them to action, and if they did not comply, the feeling, instead of being pleasant, would be painful. There is much more of this delicate susceptibility in young animals than old. Many of the nervous fibres are destroyed by age, while others are rendered callous; thus, persons advanced in life perceive that they have less spring and buoyancy than formerly. And brute animals, as they grow old, evince little disposition for frolic and play.

The tubular nervous cords, in their beautiful net-work arrangement and distribution throughout the body, are probably the channels of some subtile fluid, which, in a healthful state, excites a gentle irritation, and imparts a grateful feeling to the delicate structure, causing the sensation of pleasure and hilarity which, in popular language, is termed "a good flow of animal spirits."

"Why," it is sometimes inquired, "may I not always be as happy as I am now?" The answer is—a man is happy now because he possesses health and nervous vigour; or, difficulties which had beset him have vanished; or, his efforts are attended

by unusual success ; or, instead of being in the midst of repulsive company, he is among those with whom he is delighted ; or, bleak and dreary natural scenery has been exchanged for pictures of fertility and beauty ; or, despondency has been succeeded by hope.

What I have mentioned are causes of enjoyment relatively. If there were no contrast, no darkness to be melted by the morning rays, no clouds to be gilded by sunshine, we should lose the most beautiful part of our experience. As the waters of the ocean agitated by winds, are continually rising and sinking, so the feelings of human beings are elevated and depressed.

Among such a variety of experience, a man, when he is brimful of hilarity and enjoyment, will act wisely if he listen to the monition, "Moderate your pleasures, otherwise cheerlessness and gloom will follow, both of which will be deeper by contrast." And when he is sunk in disappointment and wretchedness, he may hear the same monitor, in a gentle and encouraging strain, soft and musical as the harp of Melpomene—"Despond not: the darkness which veils all earthly good shall melt away, and, with the ruddy light of health and joyousness, regions of happiness, bounded by far-stretching gilded realms of hope, shall open to your delighted view!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

Political and other Hobbies.

IF it be a man's duty to enforce, rather than to make laws, he cannot consistently object to a statute to-day, and compel submission to it to-morrow. He will hold, therefore, (as many a man does, who is entangled in a system and cannot "back out,") that "whatever is, is right," until, by the substitution of something preferable, it be proved wrong. Hence, it must be deemed just (and perhaps it is so in reality) that hobby-horses, as well as other horses, should, under certain circumstances, be taxed. Thus, we pay for "armorial bearings," (aware, however, that there is a great boon, in this respect, offered to bachelors and lodgers,) setters, pointers, and other dogs. (Here, it must be observed, that the arrangement of the words is purely accidental.) The other dogs to which I have referred being as numerous as the *penates* or household gods of

the Romans—said to have been thirty thousand. The species *equus caballus*, under twelve hands, is not taxed; but a hobby-pony, of half the height, may be liable to duty. Political hobbies, however, are generally free. To these I shall now give attention, and cause two or three of them to be “trotted out” for a “small minute;” the exact duration of which, however—having investigated the matter since I wrote the word—I cannot ascertain.

Wonderful hobbies there are of a political kind—all descriptions of nostrums for curing the real or imaginary evils that “flesh is heir to;” direct, indirect taxation; unreal property to be exempted from tax, and real income to be free; premiums to be awarded to profits on speculations, and penalties on losses; stamps to be affixed to everything having the stamp of merit, and duties on every man who performs his duty; voluntary and involuntary taxation—the former on the “poor-box” system, and the latter subject to “liberal bonuses;”—systems with five points, some with no *points*, but attended by *accents* of admiration, that such great effects should be produced by such little causes; some afford protection to—their own interests, and others demand non-protection for—the interests of others. Every one’s political hobby is the finest, handsomest, best-conditioned, most useful hobby that

ever existed. It might be saddled with the cares of a nation, or made to pull the heaviest budget up the steepest acclivity of opposition.

Innumerable are the hobbies among enthusiasts and fanatics in every age and country. Some speculators fancy they shall pass safely over the bridge which spans the gulf between this world and the next, if they reduce themselves, by abstinence and self-denial, to mere skeletons; others, that they shall do so if they maim and disfigure themselves, so that neither man nor angel could recognise them, as if men were (like children's toys) created to be broken up and destroyed; others seem to fancy that, by inaction of the corporeal and intellectual faculties, by inducing extreme rigidity of the muscles and the mind, they shall make themselves acceptable to the Being who adapted them for action; others, that if they spend their hours, by day and night, in mumbling prayers, they shall attain to a high degree of favour with Heaven—making themselves mere machines—while, in some instances, the same kind of work has been done by a cylinder, which, in turning, exhibited, or offered up, a variety of petitions—a much more easy, and, perhaps, acceptable mode; others (as Hindoo devotees) endeavour, in calm abstraction—in a separation from earth, its cares and pleasures—to rise to, and be absorbed in, Deity; others believe

that they shall most successfully please the Great Spirit—the Father of the human race—if they cultivate the most ungodlike feelings, cherish low and even fiendish passions, and scatter, among all who do not think as they do, anathemas, firebrands, and death—as if a differing from them were a sin against God!—their opinions being infallibly right, and all others infallibly wrong. Gentiles have made a hobby of the merit of persecuting Jews, Mohammedans of Christians, Roman Catholics of Protestants and *vice versa*, and Protestants of one another.

Some hobbies among enthusiasts have been very harmless. Perhaps, chimerical schemes for perfectionising a part or the whole of the world—schemes which would occasion no result but an incredulous smile. Others, especially prophetic ones, may have been injurious; for instance, that the globe, “with all that it inherit,” in this month or the next, would pass away, and leave not “a rack behind.” A thousand most *credible* prophecies of this sort have been uttered by fools or knaves; but, if another, numbered 1001, were introduced for the patronage of the world, many a man would mount such a hobby, and ride it long after the predicted day and hour had passed away.

Then we have a variety of eccentric hobbies. Some that are not satisfied with merely yea and

nay, but restrict themselves to neigh. Some that won't take an oath to save the spotless fame of their great-grandsires. Some that hate war, and are, indeed, peace-hobbies. Some (and perhaps they are right) are water-drinkers. Others are vegetarians. Some dislike to be curbed, or held with a tight hand; but think the reins ought to be given to *them*. They won't run in harness, or be saddled with the cares of others; but prefer unbridled liberty. Some are so artless, that they care not for fine—or any other—art, not even for music, not excepting the solos, with occasional antiphonies, that burst from the roofs of houses, on a calm moonlight (or any other) night. Fine conceptions, perhaps, in categorical order, exquisitely intoned and full of pathos.

CHAPTER XIX.

The Disorders of Order.

WE have been looking at some of the eccentricities that "flesh" (of various kinds) "is heir to," with the disorders which humanity exhibits; and we may, perhaps, lay it down as a rule, that in all disorder there is a certain degree of order, while in order there is a wonderful amount of disorder. Let us look at the latter. When the eye first alights on the word *order*, we can scarcely tell what it means, it is so very Protean, assuming all shapes, twisting, turning itself, and performing all sorts of gyrations, as if it were not a representative of the people, but a paid voter. It has, however, risen into great favour, and become the prime minister of words, having much power and patronage.

To demonstrate the truth of the proposition which I have just placed before my readers, I may remark that there are architectural orders—including the noblest works of antiquity and

modern times. There are achromatic orders—"orders grey," white, black, &c. There are ecclesiastical—including major and minor orders, deans and sub-deans, chanters and chapters, prebendaries and canons! And, bless me! what a variety of canons! but we will review these after. There are orders incorporal, corporal, and corporate; orders civil and uncivil. Different orders of "Knights and Deys." Orders military, including "close order" and "open order," "manual order" and marching order. A regiment going abroad or coming back is under "orders;" but a bill that comes back is under "no orders." There are different orders in nature, including all genera, species, &c.—all unipeds, bipeds, tripeds, quadrupeds, and multipeds. There is the order of disorder in every case of *lusus naturæ*; and an order of variety when, as Pope says, "Some are, and must be, greater than the rest." On account of this polyform character, there is no other word that receives such varied treatment from human beings. Orders may have a "deaf ear" turned to them (on the principle of turning everything, even the apparently useless, to some account); they may be neglected, rejected, despised; or they may be listened to (the "hearing ear" being turned towards them), obeyed, respected, honoured.

Now for the canons. "Dear me!" says everyone who looks at them, "what a number of canons!"

Yes, indeed, quite a park of artillery. There are cannons of iron, cannons of bell-metal, cannons of brass, and (as I have observed) canons of flesh and blood without any brass. There are canons of civil law and canons of uncivil law. There are ecclesiastical canons, among which are primitive and unprimitive, legitimate and illegitimate: canons manufactured at Gangra, Ancyra, Antioch, Chalcedon, Constantinople, and divers other places; all harmless in one respect, being unconnected with powder, though with frequent reference to "shot." Then we have major canons and minor canons. We have roaring, thundering, stunning cannons—cannons that knock down external opposition; and by internal opposition, are upset in the recoil. Also, canons of taste and canons of criticism; canons that actually eat, others that are crammed like turkeys. Some that take in wine, others that swallow "grape." Canons that "miss fire," others that "vomit forth" flames and smoke. Canons that revel on turtle-soup, and cannons that glut themselves with human blood. Canons that level, in some respects, all ranks of the laity; and cannons that sweep down whole ranks of the army. Canons, for the security of the Church, are planted in all the great ecclesiastical establishments. There are canons at York, Canterbury, Durham, Exeter, &c.; and St. Paul, instead of "a rod," has a good number of heavy canons planted in his

cathedral in the metropolis;—one of which, some years since, was brought (or brought himself) to play, in good earnest, on some disreputable repudiators (a species of bankrupt “black legs”) in the Dis-united States.

The civil law has patronised canons; hence, the law-courts are bristling with this kind of artillery. We need say little of naval and military men, for these deadly things are the life of them; and although, in all other society, a “great gun” is most promptly “cut” (to make him smaller, or to feel small), and a great “bore” is most studiously avoided; yet among these bellicose beings, the greater the gun and the greater the bore, the more it is valued. It is singular, but a fact, canons are used as corner-stones in building. The divine, logician, lawyer, artist, establishes his theories, whenever he can, on canons. An enemy, however, if he cannot dislodge them, ridicules them as worthless, or crams them with more powder and shot than they can bear; then exploding them, blows up the building. The materials are not lost; they are gathered and incorporated with other structures. However, the meddling with such dangerous agents—the priming, the charging, the puffing, the flashing, the explosion, the bursting, &c.—occasions a great deal of hurry, alarm, and bustle, which disturb quiet people, and scarcely suffer them, amidst so much cannonading, to make themselves worthy of being canonized.

CHAPTER XX.

Weatherwise Folly.

THERE are, as I have just observed, a great variety of canons, but I omitted to mention those of the weatherwise, which in reality are mere "puffs." It may, however, be said that this is an age of puffing. One reason seems to be that there is, in the world, a great deal of "up-hill work;" and some people being "short-breathed," cannot help themselves—they must puff. On the other hand, "long-winded" people puff also. Now, the two sorts severally referred to, include almost all the human family; consequently, nearly all are puffers. We have puffs on every hand, in all conceivable varieties. Puffs from the mouth of a quack; puffs from the nose of a bellows; puffs from the hands of a pastry-cook; and, without puffing on the subject, we may declare that, in regard to the diversity of puffs, there is no end. Still I think that speculators

should not puff about the weather, and lead silly souls captive in chains of error. Feeling some interest in the subject, I have devoted pretty much time to the misty, cloudy, rainy, bright, flatulent, calm, and other conditions of nature, as shadowed forth with much clearness, in the (not erratic notions, but, I hope) true principles of meteorology. And in the first place, I may observe, it is an error to believe that the moon must have a considerable influence on the weather, because it has on the tides. As it regards the latter, the effects are visible—they are uniform and correspondent with the relative position of the luminary; but the variations of the weather are not uniform, nor correspondent with the positions or changes of the moon. This planet, in producing the tides, influences the whole ocean; if it affected the weather, why should not the result be equally extensive? But there is no uniformity in the latter—there is no evidence that it conforms to any rule; on the contrary, we perceive a multitude of influences as so many regulators,—the atmosphere sometimes moving gently in zephyrs, and at others, rushing onward in the varieties of gale, storm, and hurricane—in some parts travelling in trade-winds, in others, passing from the sea to land by day, and in the opposite direction by night. The air moving on a watery surface, becomes saturated with moisture, while it

absorbs, retains, or rejects the humid particles in the exact ratio of its temperature. Electricity, and other meteorological phenomena, must be included in the reckoning. The hot air of the tropics ascending and passing towards the poles; the less heated and lower air rushing in to supply the deficiency; the latter possessing a less velocity than the earth's surface over which it passes, and the former a greater, materially affect the currents of the atmosphere; while, as a necessary consequence, some parts of the globe are deluged with rain, and others are parched. There is, as it were, a vast and complex system of wheels within wheels, working sometimes in a small circle of periodical regularity, in others, with a large cycle of changes, but evidently depending on the annual and diurnal revolution of the earth, the course of the winds, the temperature, &c.—in fact, a vast assemblage of apparent discords resulting in one great harmony. These laws are not limited to a district, kingdom, or continent, but are extended to the whole globe. Yet some imagine, without the least proof, and contrary to analogy, that the moon in her changes, regulates the changes of the weather! It is true that the latter arise cotemporaneously with the former, for the moon is always changing; and this, most certainly, is the only connection—though, in respect of cause and effect, no connection at all.

The theory that the quarterings of the lunar planet at particular hours, are indications of the succeeding meteorological changes, is probably one of the most unfounded and unphilosophical that was ever hatched by ignorance and credulity! Let us suppose, for instance, that fine weather would exist if the change took place at midnight—rain at three, storms at six, something else at nine, and ditto at twelve; and thus, as the moon runs round the earth, she would bestow a seven days' portion of sunshine, rain, or storms, separate or mixed, as the case may be! And all this, not on account of the great causes in operation (some of which we have looked at), but because the birth of the new moon, or the decease of the old one, happened to take place when the chronometer indicated a particular hour! We are aware that, in most climates, and particularly in ours, the weather depends very much on the direction of the wind. Now, if there were data for the moon and the weather, why not for that on which heat and cold, clear and cloudy skies, sunshine and rain are in a great measure dependent? Why may not our weatherwise people, who strike out, or are struck by (including the moon-stricken), all kinds of theories, besides what are grounded on facts and common sense, give us a weather-almanac, which shall predict for every day throughout the year, in

all places to which the tables could apply, the various courses of the wind ?

A friend of mine who farms on a large scale, but never cultivated in himself the principles of philosophy, received, in answer to some inquiries, very copious and accurate predictions of the weather for November last, from the rather eccentric Professor of Astronomy at———. “My ceaseless researches and unceasing observations, conducted amidst night-watches and day chronometers, on the surface of the green earth (unless when of a different colour), and beneath a clear sky (unless when curtained with clouds), give to my communication an impress of truth, which can, of course, be exhibited by no other authority. I will not say that I bear no rival near my throne, for no one ever ascended half high enough to know where my throne is. If he could discover the most prominent point in a perfect sphere, or a ‘break’ in an endless series, he might, also, my location. In drawing aside the curtain of futurity for the purpose of giving a few glimpses of November, I may observe that I cannot, with any propriety, say that it will resemble any month that has ever succeeded it. This announcement may startle timid persons ; but I must regulate my communication by the rule of truth, and they, their feelings, by that of reason. The luminaries of heaven will be (to use a familiar phrase) ‘down

in the mouth.' An exception will occur in the early dawn, when the sun will be 'looking up.' Another exception will exist with the moon; she will exhibit herself in her most cheerful aspect, in the early part of the month, but will soon become gloomy and reserved. I can assert (what I am sure you have not previously heard), that we shall not have a new moon for several months—it is intended to make the old one serve. The temperature, which has been remarkably high during the greater part of October, has not been occasioned by the 'boiling over' of one of our great subterranean furnaces! A most ridiculous hypothesis; how it could have obtained currency I know not. The present weather will continue until we have a change. One variety will then succeed another; for it is worthy of observation, that heat and cold, wet and dry, clear and cloudy, are not, in any particular place, cotemporaneous. In respect of the huge terraqueous body (on whose back we travel along the course of time), I may predict that it will be much troubled with coldness of the extremities—it will be frost-bitten in many parts, and partially affected by a white cutaneous disease. Dame Nature (who is sometimes a very 'wet nurse,' and sometimes a dry one), will probably employ, as a curative process, a shower-bath, which will be attended, on the part of the patient, with much flatulency. The planets

will perform their usual courses—at least, I am not advised of any material alteration. There are, however, several huge comets just beyond the range of telescopic view. If they approach near enough, they will become visible.”

It is, of course, very gratifying when men of undoubted talent condescend to distribute a little of their knowledge among those who have not been favoured with the advantages of culture.

It is quite a mistake to suppose that the position of a new moon has any connection with a particular state of the atmosphere. For instance, that if the crescent be erect it indicates fair, and if “on its back,” foul weather. The position of the moon is as necessary as that of the sun; and any one may know when, during the next thousand years, that satellite will, or will not, be “on its back.” There is an accidental connection (but nothing more) between the position of the moon and particular kinds of weather.

Strange as it may be, (and yet, perhaps, we have a clue to the solution of the mystery,) there are more deviations from sane thinking in respect of the moon than any other object. Some time since, an apprehension arose on the expected occurrence of two full-moons in the month of July. A similar event (it was said) has not occurred since the year 1776. Then followed a parallel of the actual calamities of that year, and

the probable calamities of 1852! A disposition of this sort, sober philosophy, and even common sense, condemns—a disposition eager to discover novelties and convert them into prodigies. There is no mystery or any materials for a prognostic in the occurrence of two moons in one month—why should there be? The lunar month consists, of course, of twenty-nine days and nearly a half. Now, what cause of wonder if the existence of one moon and the beginning of another were included in thirty-one days? or if, by the same rule, the moon were full in the beginning of a month, and full again in the latter part? Surely, the next great prodigy will be the occurrence of five Sundays or Mondays in a month! Such an event would be succeeded by (if they occurred at all) famine, pestilence, earthquake, and war! I have not had time to trace the registers of the moon's progress—her births and arrivals at womanhood—so far back as 1766: but I find (which will be sufficiently satisfactory) that in October 1849, there were two full-moons: and I have no doubt that, from this period to 1766, a similar event has occurred twenty times! It will not, I presume, be said that the marvellous results would be restricted to two full-moons in *July*. Why should something necessary be supposed contingent—selected for the purpose of heralding something else? Timid people may, assuredly, on such an occasion, go to

rest at night without fearing that, on awaking in the morning, they shall find themselves swallowed up by an earthquake, or swept away by a tornado!

But, if it had not occurred for a century, or would not for a thousand years, what necessary connection would it have with physical evil rather than good? If it brought anything, might it not bring health as well as pestilence, abundance as famine, peace as war? The ignorant and superstitious have always been anxious to frighten themselves and others—to start at fear where “no fear was.”

It is a mistake to suppose that the weather at the time of the equinoxes is more stormy than at any other. The cutting of one imaginary circle by another forms, of course, imaginary angles, and cannot be attended by any real result. No one supposes that the *line* of the equator is such an impediment to navigators that ships are obliged to “lie to” until, by the aid of machinery, they can be lifted over it. A vessel leaving this latitude, sails onward (if she be so destined) to the tropics and the equator, while the temperature and other characteristics vary with the latitude; but it is a gradual change. And so is the variation from one season to another. As it respects gales, we have very few in June or July. They are not common in August. We have some in September, more in October, and still more in

November and December. January is, sometimes, very stormy. There are severe gales in February ; not so severe in March, less in April, still less in May, &c. But why is it said that the equinoxes are unusually stormy, when we have more severe gales in October than September, and more in February than March? Besides, a proverb informs us (and proverbs are usually founded in truth) that "March comes in like a lion, and goes out like a lamb." That is, it is like a lamb at the time of the equinox!

CHAPTER XXI.

Tom and Fred again.

"WHY is it," said the latter to the former, "that almost every one laughs at the breaking of a pitcher?" "Because," said Tom, "one earthen vessel rejoices in the misfortunes of another."

Fred.—"Open the door."

Tom.—"Think, for a moment, and tell me what you mean. I can understand how a box may be opened, by lifting the cover and exposing the inside to view; but the pulling up of the cover would hardly be termed opening the cover. By the same rule, you may open a house, by pulling the door backwards or forwards, but how would that be *opening the door*?"

"True, true. Pull the door, then; but pull it the right way."

"I have obeyed your instructions."

"Now, please to close the door."

"The door is already close."

"Close to what?"

"To that which touches it—namely, the atmosphere and the hinges."

"Pull it close to the door-frame."

"The whole of the door, or a part of the margin?"

"A part of the margin."

"What shall I do with the rest?"

"Leave it where it is, if it will not accompany the other part."

"Now we are fairly out, we will take a walk."

"Where will you take it?"

"In the fields."

"Will you take it with you to the fields, or wait until you arrive there before you take it?"

"We will take it now, then, and at the intermediate times."

"Not if you stand still, of course."

"No; but all the times that we are progressing."

"Will you take a walk in every period of the time?"

"Yes."

"And yet all these walks will be but one walk."

"True."

"Do you take it rather than give it?"

"We shall, I suppose, neither give nor take, but perform it. The roads are dusty, are they not?"

"What roads?"

"This on which we are."

"You call this roads, do you? This road, then, you think, is dusty. What is the road?"

"Just the part that we can see."

"Can you see nothing more than the dust?"

"No."

"Then a smart breeze would carry the road away?"

"No, no, I mean that the road is under what we see."

"The dust, then, is on the surface of the road?"

"Just so."

"How deep is the road?"

"Several feet."

"But, it is not dusty all the way down; consequently, only a part, and not all the road, is dusty."

"Have it your own way. However, one thing is certain, that a little rain would lay the dust and make it much more pleasant."

"My dear Fred! If you have more dust *laid*, you would increase, rather than diminish, the quantity."

"Go to Flanders."

On another occasion, Fred being rather unwell, the following colloquy occurred.

"What's the matter, Fred?"

"I have a stitch in my side."

"Are you mended then?"

"Mended, no! indeed."

"Would a few stitches more be of any use?"

"Why, there was no rent."

"What was the use of having one stitch?"

"I can't tell. I didn't want it."

"If there were no rent that required a stitch, still there might be a stitch which required to be ripped."

"Thank you! I don't want to be ripped immediately. I am sure that the knife, if it went the whole length of the pain, would run all the way up my side."

"Then yours is a long, narrow pain."

"Yes, sometimes; at other times, it collects itself at the lowest rib, and makes a stab directly through."

"Collect itself!—'itself' is complete before it begins to collect; and if so, what is to be collected? However, we will let that pass, 'the lowest rib,' that's the lower part of the chest, is it not?"

"Just thereabout."

"The pain, then, is not confined to the chest, but it comes out sometimes."

"It does so, and shoots in all directions."

"Is it a good marksman?"

"Without doubt."

"Is it constantly engaged in troubling you?"

"No, when I am still, I am not disturbed; but the very moment that I move, I feel a stab."

"Is it not said, 'a stitch in time saves nine'?"

"It is; and if it be necessary to have a thing before you can save it, then I may have had my stitch and the nine too."

"But I thought you said that you had only one stitch?"

"One great stitch, and many little ones."

"I hope that, with so many stitches, you will not be 'sewn up.'"

CHAPTER XXII.

Concerning Beards.

SOME reflections on beardless boys, and their pranks have put me a-thinking on the pranks,—the whims and oddities of bearded men, or the eccentricity of men in allowing themselves to be bearded. And, here, I “would not be misunderstood”;—I do not refer to the indignity of being pulled by the beard, or (the same though different) brow-beaten; but the practice of allowing the beard to grow. And (to use another pet phrase,) “don’t mistake me,” I place not my objection so much against the act of growing, as the allowing of the beard to be. And here I “crave pardon,” for, if the beard exist, it has no choice—“to be or not to be” *is not* the question, though a great authority (from whom, with diffidence, I dissent) has said “that *is* the question.” However, amidst such a mass of material as that which constitutes the beards of all who are not beardless, we must not descend to the

splitting of hairs. Generally, the beard-question, as to *sense*, could be settled in a few words :—add something (a beard) to something (a man's chin) and there remains nothing. Subtract something (a beard) from something (a man's chin) and there remains something. For the practice of shaving is a result of civilization ; and it seems, at the first (and the second) glance, to be either scrupulosity or recklessness (and both these occasionally play queer pranks) which would induce a man to deviate from long-established custom, and to countenance that which so disfigures the countenance.

But, before we decide, let us hear what the beard-fancier has to say for himself. It is a rule from which, I hope, I never deviate,—to allow every man to have a fair hearing, and a fair chance of exculpation, never forgetting the monition, “You need not say anything to criminate yourself.”

To return to the subject, we will, in the beard-question (though I may observe—for every man is influenced by prejudice—I have never been able, in respect of criminals brought before me, to disconnect the ideas of a beard and a bandit) confine our attention to civilians. If the military man thinks that a beard and moustache make him look ferocious, and that, in the lines, ten men so accoutred will produce as much effect, in intimidating

the foe, as twelve with bare chins and upper lips, let him indulge the notion ; and, if well-founded, it may produce some effect in respect of a "standing army"—an important consideration to taxpayers, and not an indifferent matter to the members of the "Peace Convention," who would rejoice in an increase of beards (themselves exempted from the badge), if it would produce a decrease of bayonets.

And, in respect of those whom we would judge, we must not, on this occasion, admit any plea arising from indolence, a love of affectation, a disposition to fraternize with the *simia* tribes, or even with those savages on whom the light of civilization never rested. What proof, then, is there that men are wrong in shaving, but right in preserving the beard ? The first and chief would be the prohibition, by Divine Revelation, of shaving. But there is not a hint of this kind. Men are allowed to cut the hair of their head as short as they please—to do what they like with their beards.

The second, and a powerful plea, would be obedience to the law of Nature. But Nature does not demand that her production shall remain unaltered by the hand of man. She has constructed her works, generally, on the principle of utility. She has endowed man with excellent powers, and adapted him for action. Now, what duty has she

appointed for him? Among other matters, the polishing and improving some of the comparatively inferior productions of her hands, which are thrown out in a rough state.

As Nature acts in reference to utility, man also must so act. If the latter go beyond the authorized limit, he will find, by pain, or other ill effects, that he has been transgressing.

As an illustration of what Nature intended, and man performs, let us look at plants, shrubs, trees—transplanted, clipped, grafted, and altered again and again, so that no one could recognise the original in the improved productions which are placed before his eyes. Who would discover much resemblance between potatoes of original growth and those of modern days? or between the small distasteful *crab-apple* and the golden pippin?

These improvements are obtained in the way which Nature appointed, *by altering the works of Nature*. Man sows the ground with grass-seed, and Nature causes a multitude of plants to spring up, which mantle and hide the soil. What does man do? He mows down two-thirds of the vegetable produce. Is this contrary to the course of Nature? Certainly not. Whether he cuts grass, or corn, or thorns, he does it in reference to expediency. But, may he cut his beard? Do you not think that expediency, utility, or convenience may be studied in this case as well as others?

But, it may be said, "Nature would not have furnished man with a beard, if it were not to be preserved." If the mere existence of a thing were a proof that it was intended to remain, it must have been intended *so* to remain, and no one would have a right to make the least alteration in it. It would, consequently, be a flagrant violation of the purpose of Nature for a man to shear the wool from a sheep's back, to cut his own hair, or pare his nails. To kill vermin would be so manifestly contrary to the rule—"Nature would not have created, if it were not to be preserved"—that I will expend no ink in declaiming on it, but refer again to the natural condition of man. What right has any human being to put a hat on his head, or shoes on his feet, or a coat on his back? This is so incongruous with the arrangements of Nature that, although the appendages may be adapted for the body, the body is not for the appendages. Otherwise we should have had loops, pegs, and buttons, as elongations of, or depositions from tendons, ligaments, and bones. Marvellously convenient this would have been! For instance, brace-buttons immediately under the ribs and the "small" of the back; elastic straps for tying the stockings, &c.

A man must, if he hold the notion to which I have referred, comply with the requirements of Nature in all things; for it would be ridiculous to

sin against her in a hundred instances, and feel compunction for doing so in one. Before he can use the silly plea—"Nature furnished a beard, and I am bound to wear it," let him observe how far, in all instances, Nature has gone; and at those points let this whimsical person stop. This would be the rule for elevating or degrading all things to the "perfection of Nature." Vegetation and animals of all kinds must exist in a wild state. Where Nature has planted her almost boundless forests, there they must remain. To cut down a tree must be a great crime. To level a grove as criminal as levelling a beard. Weeds must be treated as tenderly as the most useful plants; for has not Nature expended as much skill on one as the other? Lions, tigers, wolves, serpents, &c. must enjoy freedom as a birthright; they may roam where they please, for we cannot imagine that Nature would have constructed such powerful, and in some instances, beautiful animals, if they were not to be preserved. It would be absurd for a man, who would not clip his beard lest he should offend Nature, to maim and destroy a noble quadruped!

Conformity to the arrangements of Nature, would carry us a long way backward. Houses, roads, bridges, ships, railroads, and an endless variety of artificial productions must be destroyed. Manufactories and the marts of commerce must

be closed; conventional law, civil government, and religion abolished; and man, as represented in fabulous early history, must live in the woods, unclothed, and dependent for subsistence on roots or berries!

What I have said would be a part of the glorious results of acting agreeably with the simple arrangements of Nature. But people who invite such a *reductio ad absurdum*, forget (what I have mentioned) that man is endowed with faculties and authority for altering and improving some of the works of Nature; and that, if he go too far, he will quickly discover his folly. If he attempt to clip his fingers, he would become sensible that he was doing what Nature forbade; but if he clip his nails, the hair of his head, or his beard, he may be sure that he is doing what Nature allows; for, if this were unlawful, these parts of the body would have been supplied with nerves of sensation. Therefore, O man! cut thy beard. Fear not; neither Nature nor Reason will condemn thee!

CHAPTER XXIII.

A Soirée.

HAVING a little spare time, I may, perhaps, be excused for transcribing a small effort of my nephew Tom, who seems to have been practising, in the hopeful speculation that he may, one day, attain the elevation of a "penny-a-liner."

"A most interesting and rare conversazione was held last evening, in the Muses' suite of drawing-rooms, in the Pantheon, under the patronage of Miss Cellanea and Miss Polly Technic. The apartments were fitted up in a style of great elegance, and tastefully ornamented with symbols of science and art. The assemblage was very large; indeed, the place was so much crowded that we could not, for some time, recognise any but those who were close to us. In this number we were pleased to see Mr. Phil. Hosophy, Mr. Fissy Hognomy, Mr. Matthew Matics, Mr. Jim Nastics, and, a little further back, we espied Mr.

Dick Shunhary, with Miss Hetty Mology at his arm.

"There were many ladies to enliven the wits of the gentlemen, and eclipse the artificial beauties with the lustre of their eyes. We were much pleased to observe that Miss Ann Halogy was present; also Miss Judy Kature and Miss Ann Hatomy. These were nearly all that we could at first recognise; but the truth is that the scene was so splendid—the animate and inanimate existences so dazzling—that we thought more of the whole than of the constituent parts.

"There was a rather curious incident in the early part of the evening, with which by mere accident we became acquainted. The footman of Miss Ann Thropy presented the card of his mistress, but it was immediately returned; and the poor lady, 'down in the mouth' more than ever, was obliged to retire. It was rather singular that Mr. Ben. Hevolence just at that moment appeared in the lobby, and was ushered in with a great deal of respect. Miss Polly Anthus entered with him, familiarly hanging by his button-hole. Miss Anna Baptist wished to obtain an entrance, but the orders were imperative that no religious sectary was to be admitted. For a somewhat similar reason, Miss Polly Ticks was unable to obtain admittance, at which she was very angry, and threatened to acquaint Her Majesty's Ministers of

the insult. Miss Sal Mody was about to walk in, when she was told that it was not a church. Mr. Jim Nastics and Mr. Hop Ticks, (who thought that the lady was in the music-line; in other words, they had a crotchet that she could quaver a little, but were not familiar with the nature of the lady's genius) had just been inquiring if she had any new waltzes, for they were inclined for a dance in the lobby! This frivolity, however, was very properly checked by the lobby authorities.

"On our return to the saloon, we were surprised to find that some little stir had happened even there; for Miss Ann Hatomy had been much shocked at Mr. Electricity's conduct towards her. However, by the kind offices of Miss Polly Technic, matters were soon changed, and feelings of repulsion gave way to those of attraction. On making some inquiry respecting the matter, we unfortunately applied to Mr. Deaf Inition, who, of course, could not explain it; but Mr. Harkeology, who was near by, gave us every particular from the beginning.

"We happened to be near Miss Cellanea, when she was expressing her delight at the fulness of the assemblage. All her friends and relations, she said, from all parts of the world, were there; and then she mentioned Aunt Arctic, Aunt Hippodees, and several others.

"Miss Polly Technic was the chief attraction

of the company. She was a star of the first magnitude in that brilliant constellation. We heard her highly eulogized for the variety of her attainments, her skill in every sort of art; and her persuasive, silver-toned eloquence. It was said that some of her productions, recently exhibited, were exceedingly beautiful and useful. A gentleman near us observed that the young lady was possessed of not only high powers, but great spirits, or (we were surprised and sorry to hear it) she would have been worried to death. 'For there is nothing scarcely,' he said, 'from a penny whistle to a grand harmonicon—or a pulley to the most complicated machine; but must be submitted to her judgment, and placed under her patronage. Needlework, painting, sculpture, printing—indeed, everything performed by human ingenuity, is consigned to her care.'

"We had scarcely time to respond to these remarks, and express our admiration of the lady, when we were astonished by some inexpressibly sweet sounds proceeding from a distant part of the room; and found, to our utter surprise, that a song in Greek was being sung by a very beautiful statue of Miss Polly Hymnia. How it was effected none of the company could tell. Miss Polly Technic had the credit for this phenomenon.

"We were roused from the delightful reverie

into which this rare occurrence had thrown us, by a sudden uproar—

‘ At ô Deorum, quicquid in cœlo regit
Terras et humanum genus,
Quid iste fert tumultus ? ’

“ On starting up, and running to the spot, we were much pained to find that Mr. Derry Vashun—who, probably, was in a brown study, or, perhaps, engaged in syllable chasing—was walking backward (as was his custom) when he stepped on the toes of Miss Hetty Mology; and feeling that something impeded his progress, but not hearing the lady’s screams, he kicked her with his heel. The result was, that she was thrown down, and Mr. Derry Vashun fell also. It is remarkable that, while they were lying on the ground, Mr. Dick Shunhary came up in the greatest distress, and said he hoped they were not seriously injured; for, if so, he was a ruined man. This conduct is rather surprising, because it is well known that both these personages have told notorious falsehoods, and deceived the old gentleman very much. It would have been less strange if he had been ignorant of these matters; but, on several occasions, there had been sad quarrellings between Mr. Deaf Inition and the other two, in which they had not hesitated to expose the ignorance and dishonesty

of each other. Mr. Horthy Kulture, who was standing by, said he should not care if Mr. Derry Vashun and Miss Hetty Mology never got up again, for they had done a great deal of harm in meddling with roots. However, they were soon raised, and Miss Ann Halogy persuaded them to shake hands.

“The occurrence was, happily, but as a peal of thunder on a summer’s day. All was again peaceful, delightful, joyous. We need scarcely say that the conversation generally was of the most brilliant description ; and that, with the few exceptions which we have recorded, all went off—including the company—in a most gratifying manner.”

CHAPTER XXIV.

Divers Mistakes.

IN order to "meet a case" in law or physic, you must not, of course, accompany it; but you must take the opposite direction to that in which the case is going. This morning I had a walk in drizzling rain. Now, how should a man "meet" the exigencies of such a case? He must, if possible, meet it by going with it. At any rate, he meets the inconvenience by going against it. But I was going to say (and now I may say it) that it is quite an error to suppose that drizzling is worse than heavy rain. The truth is that some of the pluvial libations are so copious that a person exposed to them would be drenched in half a minute. Now, if scanty rain be worse than what is less scanty, how far may we go—from the drizzle to the water-spout—before we should find an alteration in the rule? If we be exposed for an hour to rain, would it be worse to be thoroughly

wetted at the end of the sixtieth, or at the end of the first minute?

And now that I am dealing with misconceptions, (though it is desirable to have no dealings with such unfruitful things,) I may observe, it is an error to suppose that mists, fogs, dew, &c., ascend from the ground, instead of being condensations of the moisture of the air occasioned by diminished temperature. Also that clouds are attracted by hills, instead of another opinion—that hills, by withdrawing heat from the air, are, in reality, the cause of clouds.

It is a mistake to imagine that the prominent points of our globe are lofty in relation to the globe itself. If we stand at the base of a mountain, and view the vast structure rising, as it were, to the heavens,—its summit white with (as they are poetically termed) eternal snows, demonstrating the vast distance which exists between the scorching plains and the frigid heights—we are impressed with a notion that this magnificent structure of rocks must constitute a prominent feature on the earth's surface. But what is the fact? Six miles in perpendicular height is only a four-thousandth part of the circumference of the globe. Hence, the elevation is one inch to four thousand inches: and, in order to show the proportionate altitude of the vast ranges of the Andes or the Himalayas, we must, on the

flooring of a room eighty feet in length, form a model of one quarter of an inch in height !

It is an error to suppose that time is the measure of changes ; whereas, changes are the measure of time. Great and uniform changes serve as a guide for other changes. Thus, the most important and uniform movement, the revolution of the earth on its axis, is the measure of all other movements.

It is a mistake to conclude that the sentence *Vox populi vox Dei* is any more than a poetical expression. The "voice of the people" may be that of the inhabitants of a village, of a town, a county, a kingdom, or of the civilized world. It may be the voice of a hundred, a thousand, a million, or a hundred millions. It is merely the general opinion—the decision of a majority. The voice of the people of a town may be different from that of a district, and a district from that of a kingdom. The acts of a few may govern those of a multitude : and, if the latter tacitly submitted, the acts would be termed the acts of the people. The abolition of the Sabbath in France, and the substitution of Decades, with many other proceedings during the Reign of Terror, were not actually, though nominally, agreeable with the voice of the people.

Among the classes of a community, it is probable that the decision sometimes would be

erroneous. For instance, if a proposition were made for an equal division of property in this country, the matter to be decided by ballot, the voice of the people would be in favour of division—simply because the mass of money-gainers would be larger than that of money-losers. But we are aware that a temporary destruction of the kingdom would be effected by it. The result would be either universal anarchy and wretchedness, or a sudden return to the old system; which proves, of course, that *Vox populi vox Dei* is to be spoken and received with a great deal of qualification.

All men and all systems are imperfect; and, being liable to error, no decision can be implicitly depended on. Ignorance and selfishness are mixed up with much of knowledge and probity; so that to “try the spirits” is a monition of vital importance, not only as it regards ourselves, but the judgment of the various bodies which exist around us, and of which we occasionally form a part.

And now that we are talking of the people, let us look for a moment at the rising generation—a subject in which I always feel an interest; for there is scarcely a day in which I have not reason to think, that if children were better instructed, there would be less crime and more happiness in the world. We will inquire whether the notions of some people on education be founded on truth or error. I do not mean to make a long preface,

but I may remark that, with a considerable portion of the earth adapted for vegetation, Divine Providence has provided a source of labour for the greater part of the human family. The mineral treasures of the globe, directly or indirectly, furnish employment for a vast number of persons. The well-being of society requires an almost countless variety of labourers, while the more menial are as necessary as those of an opposite character. When civilization progresses, and we go from the necessities and utilities to the luxuries of life, the fine arts, with literature and science, engage the energies and provide the means of subsistence for many.

Genius, too, in its extraordinary developments on its several pathways, is recognised and patronised. Commerce, in its innumerable branches—import, export, marine, and inland—requires the attention of a great portion of the community. This being the condition of a people—for example, that of our own country—and it being a fact that an improved and more extended education will raise the character of a nation, the question is, what is the principle on which we ought to act? Most certainly we should endeavour to educate and improve the people where they are, in their several classes. The great error (to which I have referred) is the project of taking the people out of these classes. It is not unusual in treatises and lectures on education, for the writers to paint

in glowing colours, the ennobling results of high attainments in literature and science. One man, for instance, was the most eminent writer of his day; another the greatest linguist; another the most profound mathematician; another the brightest star of astronomical science; and it is frequently added, what these were all may be. Now, except as matters of history, or illustrations of the marvellous, these examples are worth nothing; and if designed to excite the emulation and rivalry of men in general, they are most deceptive and injurious. In the first place, all persons cannot be extraordinary. If a thousand persons endeavoured to be equal to a particular example, only one in the thousand would be most eminent, and the mass would be enveloped, more or less, in obscurity. The people cannot be improved by setting before them rare and almost unapproachable genius for imitation; especially if, in order to rival these luminaries, they must forsake their present engagements. It is the destructive speculation of attempting to live, not where men are, but where they are not; the neglecting of to-day in order to enjoy to-morrow. The favoured place, however, is never found, and the blissful morrow never realized. Thus thousands of speculators and adventurers, men drawn out of their orbits and made wandering stars, derange the economy of society.

Great endowments of genius, and qualifications

for extraordinary eminence are, of course, as the terms imply, extremely rare. They will rise into notice as surely as the eagle will stretch out his pinions and soar towards the sun. Exceptions do not require legislation, nor are they controlled by it. They are provided for only by being avoided, or by a "save" and "except." The general rule then, in respect of education, should be to make every man, if possible, more efficient in his present lawful calling. To supply him with the means of virtuous pleasure—a taste for reading, a taste for the beauties of nature; in fact, to make him more skilful in his ordinary duties, a better husband and father, a better member of civil society, and a better Christian. If education could not do this, it would be worth nothing. If all men were instructed for their condition, the mass would be elevated. This would not prevent individuals from rising in society; for the readiest mode of effecting this, is by proceeding in a known track, not by adventuring on a new one. But if men are persuaded to endeavour to be eminent—all to be eminent—it is like luring benighted travellers, by exhibiting a light on some almost inaccessible point, and causing them (or many at least) to grope through the intervening darkness, and, in attempting to reach the dazzling attraction, to be lost among ravines and torrents.

CHAPTER XXV.

Gossip from a Friend.

THE title-page of my book announces the presentation to the reader of (would it were more worthy of his acceptance) "Tracings," by &c. Now, I am not apparently just towards my correspondents—to whom I am so largely indebted—in omitting to recognise them. I do—therefore, in introducing a communication from an old friend—a little recreative gossip of himself, and other matters—make this confession and apology.

"Probably there is nothing so agreeable, occasionally—so soothing to the spirits, as for a man to talk of himself. Patients tattle by the hour to their physicians on this subject, and enter fully into all their sensations, painful or pleasant, desponding or hopeful, to any friends who (as Marc Antony wished his audience to do) will lend their ears.

"There is an old lady, the relict of Sir Hard-

castle —, a great friend of my father, who has had much affliction ; and the only solace for her wearied mind is, to give an apparently unwearied relation of all her symptoms from the beginning. This she will do whenever her friends will listen. The second time I thought it tiresome ; the third, extremely tedious ; the fourth, insufferable ; the fifth, bearable ; and then I became resigned. I now think, generally, that if it be no pleasure to me, it is to her ; and I am willing to alleviate the painful monotony of her life. I was going to say, I often think I ought to be thankful to Divine Providence for having favoured me with health and competence. I put health a compliment due to it) first ; for what is the latter without the former ? Who would prefer forty thousand a year, with a headache, to four hundred a year and health ? My income lies between the two—much nearer the minor than the major ; however, I am content. I dare say I might, by speculation, increase my income, or—lose it. What glorious prizes are offered to discerning (or deluded) individuals in the public prints ! For the outlay of a thousand pounds a man may receive fifteen hundred a year ! Some offers relate to larger, and some to smaller outlays and incomes ; but most of them are so advantageous, that I am sometimes amazed that people cannot make arrangements at home, but are compelled to go abroad with their favours. However, I am happy to say that, being content

with my little, I am not desperately inclined to augment it.

"I will not conceal (and I believe you know it) that I am rather influenced by a disposition for loquacity. This I inherited from my predecessor, infant *ego*; for, though originally derived from our parents, (or rather, from Noah or Adam,) we all have proceeded from the unconscious being of a day old. Our high and mighty original was a diminutive thing, dandled in Nurse's arms, or perhaps, for her convenience, put on the floor! How wonderfully do circumstances and man alter in a few years! The great mathematician of Megara teaches us that, if we take equal parts from equals, the remainders are equal. This is evident enough; but if we take a man from a baby, what would be the remainder!

"I have just been thinking (for I am in my library, surrounded by folios, quartos, and other varieties of instructors—by-the-bye, I will, if I have time, tell you something of my library arrangements,) that I do not like ponderous books. 'Little and good,' was one of the brief but early canons of my mental council. At the same time, I was fully aware that worth is not necessarily in the inverse ratio of bulk. I was most painfully convinced of this, on looking at myself in a gloomy moment, being, as you are aware, rather small of stature. However, I do not pa-

tronise bulky works, except for occasional reference. I could never swallow '*Acta Sanctorum Omnium*,' in forty-seven volumes folio; and if any one were to do so, he would never digest it. Even St. Thomas's *Summa*, or summary of his great theological work, would engage a man for twelve months. One is rather startled at the formidable arrangements adopted by some authors. On opening one of the volumes you see, perhaps 'book 4, sec. 32, subsec. 55, chap. 29, paragraph 162.' Hence, a certain sentence would be (somewhat in the style of 'The House that Jack Built') of such a paragraph, such a chapter, sub-section, section, book, volume! What a gratifying announcement it must have been of the Presbyterian preacher, in the good old Cromwellian times, when human beings seemed as if created for the purpose of preaching, or being preached to, that, having finished his twenty-nine propositions, with sundry remarks on each, he would now enter on his subject! One can hardly tell whether talking about the beginning or ending of a discourse be attended with the worse effect. When the latter, like that of a toilsome journey, would be the pleasantest part, it is very impolitic and tantalizing to make it loom for a considerable period in the distant prospect. On the other hand, as the finishing of a journey may be attended by regret, so may that of a pulpit-discourse. Long and short are relative.

I think I may maintain that some of the noblest views of the Creator and His works—the most masterly analyses of the human mind and passions—the most logical reasonings, and the brightest flashes of eloquence, have burst from the lips of an orator beneath the sounding-board of a pulpit.

“If, however, nothing ought to be too long, it should not be too short. Indeed, the prefix *too* is condemnatory of character. I never knew an exception, but in the case of a Mr. Toogood, who, although he was not better than he should have been, was a very worthy man. How unnecessary it is for cautious qualifiers of our ‘vernacular’ to be continually informing us that they like nothing *too sweet, too sour, too hard, or too soft*—or, indeed, *too*, in any respect—when we are perfectly aware of it.

“I do not profess to be, as you know, a profound philosopher. I possess, I hope, some bud-dings of the love of wisdom; but I am not one of those wonderful spirits, skilled in intellectual gymnastics, who can dive far below the reach of ordinary vision, or soar into the heavens until he becomes, to the wondering gazer, a mere speck—an illustration for a moment, of ‘*sic transit gloria.*’ Do what I will (perhaps it is a defect) I can never sink much below, or rise much above, the ordinary level of common sense. My fixation to such an ignoble locality prevents me (when I do write,

which is not as often as, for my benefit, it should be) from encircling an ordinary thought with robes of fleecy mist, gilded by the sun of imagination, while the spectator admires the exhibition of so much beauty, and concludes that what is thus obscure and formless, is so merely because of the weakness of his vision, and that it cannot be revealed by words, simply, because language is too poor for anything so rich. Doubtless, a great deal that passes for profundity is merely obscurity; and many a brilliant thought (as it is termed) consists of an ordinary conception tricked off with gaudy colours and tinsel—as a monkey, which, (Heaven knows!) is not extraordinary for beauty, may, in its scarlet jacket and yellow trousers, look like a most brilliant natural production!

“Some people are so grasping and selfish that they accumulate, store up, and hide all their thoughts under a ‘bushel.’ This practice is attended by a disadvantage, for, if worth the honour, they ought to be introduced to the public; and if not worth it, the parent might be liberated from an oppressive conceit of the unparalleled merit of his progeny.

“We must not, of course, condemn a thing simply because it is imperfect, for it cannot be otherwise. In everything human (to use a familiar illustration) there will be a great deal of chaff with the wheat; indeed, agreeably with the

dicta of physicians and chemists, we must, in order to preserve health, receive something like chaff in the material we eat and the air we breathe. Unmixed nutriment, or oxygen, would kill us.

“One cannot always ‘help his thoughts,’ though a little help, when thoughts are struggling to liberate themselves, may be useful. While gossiping on style and mental matters, I am reminded of a peculiarity which I possess. If I think on a subject, my thoughts remain in their original order and distinctness (to the inconvenience, as it sometimes seems, of others which should occupy their place) until they have been transcribed on paper; when immediately they fade away, like a cloud which, on a summer’s day, sails into a region too warm for its constitution, and, in almost no time, it vanishes.

“I may acknowledge that I am, in some respects, *sui generis*. I attribute this to certain rusty spots in my mental constitution, which must have been owing to the humidity of the district in which I was born, or some other cause. My excellent domestic governess, whom I place one step higher than any other woman in England (and a compliment to the latter) thinks that rubbing would never eradicate the stains. Through extreme partiality, however, she does not think them defects, but beauty-spots—like veins in wood or marble, which, the more they are polished, the

more beautifully they stand out to invite the admiration of spectators. So much for a lady's judgment of her husband! But, defects they are; and one may be allowed, 'every now and then,' to speak of them, if with humility. Is it not strange that common consent should have legalized such an expression as 'every now and then?' *Now*, is the present moment, which, while we think of it, is changed into *then*. *Now*, is one only; *then*, is the past and future. There may be many 'thens': but many or every 'now' is absurd.

"I do not imagine that my duties in my profession compel me to be very exact—much less critical—as to what is sometimes termed the 'Queen's English,' for I am aware that there is a great deal of, not only bad grammar, but bad logic in law. Nor do I conceive that my character as a good husband and kind father is in any respect dependent on grammatical accuracy, for I am sure that the language of love and the phraseology of the nursery are anything but exemplary in this particular. Still, I often find myself (when I have been wandering and have lost myself) carefully examining words, analyzing sentences, and measuring the amount of deviation from the right line. I may observe, that I have lately had a small speculation on grammatical improprieties, and a great many of the halt and maimed, be-

longing to this division, have presented themselves before me. That they would like to be made whole, I have no sort of doubt; for they have always seemed, when in the ranks, to be ashamed of their mis-shapen features. One to which I refer is (in a well-known and highly-esteemed book)—‘The craft and subtlety of the devil or man worketh’ (work) ‘against us.’ In the next clause, a plural pronoun is properly used ‘*They* may be dispersed.’ One instance of this kind will do, as ‘I cannot dwell’ on the subject. An adjective is used in the midst of passive participles—‘Was crucified, *dead*,’ (was deaded?) ‘and buried.’ Ellipsis is frequently improperly used—‘Confess them with an humble,’ (an) ‘lowly,’ (an) ‘penitent,’ &c. ‘That our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful, and that we’ (may be) ‘show forth Thy praise,’ &c.—Rather, that we *may* show forth, &c. ‘Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary,’ (was) ‘suffered under,’ &c. There is another that I may mention—‘Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where the moth and rust *doth* corrupt,’ &c. In the next clause the language is correct—‘Treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth,’ &c. And one instance more of grammatical incorrectness, ‘Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?’ The verb *say* is both transitive and intransitive. In this instance, it is the latter. It ought,

therefore, to be *who*. Who am I?—Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?

“And now I will tell you of some symbolical arrangements in my library. Painters and sculptors seem to have cast symbols aside, as if nothing would do in these utilitarian days but realities. It happens, however, that while some are throwing symbols away, others are taking them up. I need scarcely remind you of the noble spirit that is gone abroad (I don’t mean diffused into thin air, but diffused through the universal atmosphere)—the disposition to restore the customs of ancient times—in fact, the ‘dark ages;’ and it is only by the increased light of the present day that we are enabled to penetrate that darkness. I will not enter into particulars, as I mean to tell you what I have lately done in humble imitation of what is now exciting so much interest, and drawing forth so much commendation. My library, as you are aware, is tolerably large, and pretty well stored with books. This, however, would not distinguish it from many a library; but something else will give it a peculiarity of character, and serve, perhaps, as an example for general imitation. At one end, fortunately the *eastern* one, is the mantel-piece, and on this I have placed two large and handsome candlesticks, which support two noble candles (not wooden ones, as illustrative of dumb dogs, or dogs that bark but cannot bite).

These are intended as symbols of science and literature—the two great lights that enlighten the human mind. Then I have, besides, placed midway between the candlesticks, the *digamma*, carved in wood and gilded, as the emblem of classical literature. There are also mathematical, astronomical, and various other symbols, beautifully executed in mosaic-work, immediately over the mantel-piece. Books on poetry and the fine arts are arranged in nine shelves, emblematical of the Muses. Works on etiquette and several accomplishments, are in three shelves, in honour of the Graces. Other arrangements are made with various books, which I think appropriate, but need not now be specified.

“I have no less than four desks. One facing the east, at which I read ecclesiastical history and theology. Another facing the west, appropriated for profane authors. Another looking towards the south, at which I read neutral compositions, and indeed all writings that are not strictly orthodox. Then I have a composing desk on the north side; but, as it would not do to face the chilly regions of ice and snow, lest one’s genius should be frost-bitten, I turn myself round towards the genial south. These arrangements, it strikes me, are highly emblematical; indeed, there is something poetical connected with them. When I am facing the east, for instance, and reading ecclesiastical

writings, my imagination goes forth (I don't know, my dear sir, whether you have made the discovery, but I have, that the imagination travels in a direct line) to the land that not only gave birth to Christianity, but saw it raised to a state of power and glory beyond what the degenerate sons of the present age can conceive. Theological canons, symbols, ceremonies, &c.—are they not almost all derived from the East? I can fancy some of the eminent fathers of the Church standing, as it were, upon the headlands of history, and handing from one to another the invaluable and otherwise unknown articles, precepts, rules, &c., which, transmitted to the present day, have served to stir up the personages who are now restoring and furbishing the remains of Catholicism in our ancient Church, and driving back to Geneva—or to a place beginning with the next letter to G—all the foul, detested things engendered by the genius of Protestantism! But, if I read ecclesiastical history with my face towards the west, these *fine* conceptions would be absent.

“I may tell you that I have made a very important discovery of what may be termed *successional* genius. I have found that poetic endowments, for instance, were confined to particular individuals, and have been handed down through certain lines of persons. I cannot tell exactly who were the earlier possessors, nor can I make

the series of links complete ; but I can succeed far enough to convince myself—and what would satisfy me should satisfy another.

“ On particular days, which are marked on the calendar as the birthdays of celebrated men—poets, painters, natural philosophers, &c.,—I cause my candles to be lighted, and the library to be more than usually ornamented. At such times, instead of reading in the ordinary way, I prefer what is usually termed ‘ plain song,’ or chanting.

“ Now, my dear sir, with your mind’s eye behold the interesting scene :—the library ; the books symbolically arranged ; the mantel-piece decked with various ingenious devices ; the two great candles shedding their glorious light, and eclipsing the sunbeams, which are peering in to see what is doing—conscious they are not wanted ; your humble servant in a handsome robe, formed, as it would seem, out of picked pieces of a rainbow, sometimes at one desk and sometimes at another, chanting the contents of divers volumes, and making appropriate and multiform movements—bowings, crossings, genuflections, and other flections ; and I am sure you will say that it is, altogether, one of the most interesting and illustrative exhibitions that you have witnessed for many a day.

“ Yours truly.”

CHAPTER XXVI.

Something which No One Likes.

My friend, in his communication, has spoken of "competence." I may now, perhaps, be allowed to look on the other side of the picture, and, for a few minutes, treat of what no one approves—poverty. This, to the eye of the imagination, is a monster which excites strong aversion and even disgust. Let us, however, behold it with the eye of reason, and we shall infer that the imagination is not always a correct painter. Extreme poverty, without doubt, is dreadful. Its train of attendants are famine, pestilence, and death. Poverty, however, is a very comprehensive term, and includes the partial or complete privation of every kind of good. There may be, for instance, poverty of comfort, poverty of luxuries. A person may be poor and not poor at the same time. Poor he may be, inasmuch as he is destitute of a certain good: poor he may not be, inasmuch as he does not feel

the want of it. In our present imperfect condition, unvaried prosperity, for a considerable time, would disorder and destroy us; we should die of plethora: so that poverty or deprivation is, in some respects, our riches. In other words, it is essential for the due enjoyment of earthly blessings. He alone relishes true liberty, who has groaned beneath the heavy chains of bondage. He it is who is most delighted with the flowering meads and clear sunshine of human experience, that has trodden on the thorns and groped among the dark dispensations of Providence. Even food pleases us not, unless it be seasoned by hunger—the result of abstinence and privation. Rest is not delightful and invigorating except to the weary. Indeed, the zest of enjoyment, in respect of every good, is dependent on the experience of privation.

It is not desirable, however, from a love of paradox, to hide the true character of a thing, by clothing it with the qualities of some other. To deck the vampire with the glossy and brilliant plumage of some denizen of day; to represent an exception as a rule; or an indirect, as a direct result of an influence. We know, for example, that pity, commiseration, and some other virtues, could not be brought into operation without misery; but they are not the necessary result of misery. They are occasional and, in some respects, accidental attendants on pain and wretchedness. They are like flickerings of light on a gloomy

landscape, which makes "darkness visible." These heaven-born emotions do not counteract the earthly sorrow, or warrant us in concluding that mankind are happier with the pains and the virtues than without them. The truth is, that these influences diminish only in a small degree sore and heavy affliction. They are like the rainbow that bursts out, beautifully glows in the storm, and preserves the mind from sinking into gloom and despondency.

Poverty, in itself, is an evil, but it is sometimes attended by a long train of benefits. Unavoidable poverty may arouse and bring into operation many eminent virtues; while voluntary poverty, deprivation, and self-denial, seems to be essential for the health and activity of the human faculties. All kinds of toil, discipline for the mind, and medicine for the body, are in themselves evils; but they may be channels for important benefits.

There are, then, two kinds of poverty: that which debilitates—or, if extreme, destroys; and that which, being brought under due control, invigorates. Poverty, in its worst sense, is when the movement is retrograde, and the sufferer is drawn back by despondency to ruin; but poverty, in its best sense, is when the aspirant for the acquirement of good is borne onward on the wings of hope to the regions of repose and bliss—to the glorious city whose stately fanes and gilded

spires (so the fancy paints it) enamel the far-distant blue horizon.

It was long since observed, "*Paupertas omnes artes perdocet*," which is not very dissimilar from "*Necessity is the mother of invention*." The domestic and all other arts contributive to civilization, have been brought into existence on this principle. Poverty roused the Northern nations of Europe, causing them to migrate southward, and establish themselves in a genial climate, on a verdant and fruitful soil, amidst many of the comforts and even luxuries of life. Ease and indulgence have caused Southern and Eastern nations to kiss the dust at the footstool, and beneath the sceptre of invaders and despots. Thus we find, among nations, communities, and individuals, those who have been reared and invigorated by poverty, acquiring the blessings of life; while others, encircled by riches, and elevated above the dark shadows of human experience, have fallen from their high position.

Poverty then may be either a paralysing or an invigorating influence. It may draw us down to destruction, or drive us to prosperity. All are more or less under its influence, and the good or the evil arising from it will depend, in a great measure, on ourselves.

CHAPTER XXVII.

The Tenancy of our Great House.

PERHAPS in regard to most things which are not within the limits of experience, mankind are as liable to be wrong as right. Error is of many forms, truth of one form only. Among misconceptions which have prevailed, one is (to which we may now attend) that the world has not been, and that it will not be, of long continuance. The existence of man, without doubt, has not been more than about six thousand years; but the earth, apparently new, and robed in beauty, when our first parent stepped on the green turf—when he looked around on flowers and shrubs, sparkling rivulets, grove-covered hills, beasts of elegant form, and birds of brilliant plumage—had been probably tending to that state during a long series of ages. The gradual separation of fluid from solid matter; the combination of atoms, which constitutes the framework of the globe; the

slow and almost imperceptible depression and elevation of the masses—among these, towering hills brought beneath the waves of the ocean, and the sandy bed (studded with shells and other marine deposits) raised far above the level of the waters; extensive regions of coal formed, metallic veins constructed, the organic productions of early ages treasured up in imperishable stone, as a museum of the Creator's works—these and many other proofs exist of the great antiquity of the earth.

A vast period for the perfecting of anything, implies a vast period for its existence. The flower which peeps above the soil, and almost immediately unfolds its beautiful leaves and petals, as suddenly withers and dies. The oak, the growth of ages, exists-for ages without symptoms of decay. Thousands of years, multiplied by thousands, may have been necessary for rearing the magnificent structure of the earth; it is not probable that it would soon sink into ruins. Besides, we perceive that the Creator has appointed vast cycles of movements in connection with our planet: the precession of the equinoxes, for instance—one circuit of which would require more than four times six thousand years; and it would be absurd to fancy that the Great Author of Nature had appointed what would not in one instance be effected! This globe, with the other

planets and the sun, is evidently altering its relative position in the mighty universe. Indeed, all the solar systems are, perhaps, in mystic dance to the sublime harmony of celestial music, changing and interchanging their relations. This they may do for incalculable ages. Our planetary system is moving through space in an orbit of vast extent. The star formerly known as the pole-star, is not now (unless there be an allowance for the deviation) a true guide for the mariner in his voyaging on the plains of the ocean. The alteration of one degree is effected in seven hundred years; and, in order that the line marked out by the Divine Geometer should be *once* traversed, it would require two hundred and fifty thousand years!

It is a mistake to suppose that our globe is the centre of the universe, and the culminating point of all that is vast, magnificent, and interesting. The truth is, instead of the whole universe being subordinate to it, our globe is a mere speck—an atom in the plains of creation. It is, as is well known, very small compared with the planet Jupiter, and not more than a millionth part of the bulk of the sun. Our solar system is only one of eight thousand, the illuminating centres of which are visible to the naked eye; while, with the aid of powerful telescopes, we behold, not merely hundreds of thousands, but

millions of luminous points, which, in reality, are enormous solar bodies, each of which is set, probably, in the midst of a beautiful galaxy of inhabited worlds.

I need scarcely say that the more distant nebulæ, the luminous points of which have been but recently beheld, for the first time, by any inhabitant of our earth, are supposed to require a million of years in order that their light should be communicated to us. The works of the Almighty, as to time as well as space, are inconceivably vast; and we violate the harmony of creation by centralizing the universe on ourselves, or limiting the existence of our planet to a few thousand years.

We must not, of course, imagine that because the material creation is great and durable, it is superior to the immaterial;—that man, for instance, was formed for the earth, and not the earth for man; that this mundane palace was reared as the development merely of some great conception of the Divine Architect, while man was created solely for the purpose of admiring it. It is more natural, more consistent with reason, to conclude that the world was "fitted up" as a residence for human beings. That it is beautiful and wonderful, is merely the result of the skill which was employed on it. It could not be otherwise. We may conclude that the earth has

existed, and will exist, for a great period; but no period is to be compared with everlasting duration. The globe, vast as it is in extent, and wondrous in its formation, approaches not in importance to the ever-active and almost boundless powers of the intellect; for matter, however beautiful, is inert, and will undoubtedly perish; whereas man, the tenant of the earth, approaches and resembles Deity in mental powers and immortality.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Some more Hobbies.

OF subjects for reading, reflection, and conversation, there is certainly no end. We go from the intellectual to the corporeal—the earth to the heavens—the duties to the relaxations, fancies, whims, &c., of human nature. We will now look at the taste of men in selecting hobbies; and, in so doing, we pass almost imperceptibly from bodies of persons to individuals, and from individuals to bodies. The disposition of a person may harmonize with that of a district, and of a district with that of a kingdom. Some sorts of taste can be indulged only by the many, others by the many or the few. Some are cosmopolitan, others solitary. We will turn from one to the other, and scan the varieties in due order—that is, without order—as we do horses in a fair.

Accumulations, formed by individuals, are of necessity somewhat solitary in their nature; not,

of course, in respect of the parts, but the whole. Thus the book-collector forms a library, which is isolated from all other libraries. The collector of coins does the same with his accumulations; so does the collector of china, antiquities, stuffed skins of animals, living birds or beasts, sculpture, paintings, &c.; every one of whom, perhaps, thinks his own particular hobby the finest in the world,—indeed, he despises every other.

First, we will look at the book-hobby. Our collector may be a man of most catholic taste, considering all as good fish that come to his net,—or he may be very exclusive. He may have a taste for MSS. only, and perhaps for those of a particular age, devoted to particular subjects, or illuminated in a particular manner. If his hobby be printed books, they must be probably very early, printed with blocks only, or moveable types only; with or without initials; with or without certain technical characteristics; in black letter, or Italic, or Roman; produced in a particular year, or a certain city, or by some celebrated printer: or, perhaps he has a taste for tall volumes, with uncut leaves, broad and ample margins; or, for the first editions of works; or, he approves of any book, if scarce. A common book, uncommonly good, he does not value.

And, now that we are among books, I may remark that no hobbies, in cultivated society, are

more numerous or useful than reading ones. They come to us laden with inestimable stores of ancient and modern history; the records of our own land and those of distant regions; treasures of science, art, and literature; biography, poetry, and religion. We shall perceive the great utility of these agents, if we endeavour to imagine ourselves deprived of these advantages.

The collector of coins may be very catholic or exclusive in his gatherings. He may transfer to his cabinet all varieties, from the originally unstamped metallic pieces to the beautifully executed coins of Queen Victoria; or he may confine his attention to a particular age or country. However, this is a very pretty hobby—decked with the effigies of sovereigns, with mottos, shields, heraldic bearings, &c.

We come now to collections of china. This must, of necessity, be a real Chinese hobby. As we cannot gather figs from thorns, so we cannot indigenously china from the coast of Guinea. Our hobby, then, appears with a pig-tail—his tail starting from his mane—in some respect verifying the prodigy, a horse with his tail where his head ought to be. The collector of china has, perhaps, his closets stored with wonderful things. Among these, a punch-bowl, the fellow of one that was used by the emperor Ah-no, the immediate descendant of No-ah. China chopsticks, before sticks

were chopped for these convenient implements of the table. A petrification of Ning-Choo, another emperor, in real china-ware ; those eminent personages having been formed, not of common red earth, but of the finest clay. Then he has a bit of a vase, of a bowl, or other rare production, and being the last fragment of the vessel (which he can satisfactorily prove) it is of more value than the entire original.

That just mentioned, approaches very near to what I must now describe—the Antiquarian hobby. I say describe ; but if all the stalls of all the hobbies were filled with books, setting forth the wonderful varieties of antiquities from the South Seas and the North, the old world and the new (both of the same age), the times before the flood and those after ; temples with no exterior in rocky mountains, and temples with no interior—being filled with sand ; treasures which were hidden beneath the surface of the earth, and others beneath the surface of the sea, with innumerable *et ceteras* ; we may be sure that not one half could possibly be written. We will pass, therefore, to something else.

We have now before us a graceful and beautiful hobby, which exhibits the finest action, and is preceded by the Graces, which, tripping like spirits of air, strew the ground with flowers, while the “ Sacred Nine ” with music and with

song chant the praises of this noble steed. A mighty host of poets, from Hesiod and Homer down to the latest masters of melodious verse, raise a triumphant chorus, to which Nature herself deigns to pause and listen. This is Sculpture! Not the representation of Indian gods or Chinese mandarins, or the barbarous chiselling of the New World or that of Europe in the middle ages; but the beautiful productions of Grecian, Italian, and modern schools. This is a hobby of which a man may be proud.

Accompanied with similar honours, we behold the representative of Painting; and then we go from one imitation of nature to another—from the *pictures* of externals to the *possession* of externals—to natural history, as far as skins, and hair, and wool, and down are concerned. Stuffed geese and crammed turkeys are, with some, favourite hobbies; and truly, when they are intended as illustrations of the productions of nature, in their zoological characteristics, they are of great scientific utility. Indeed, they are a very commendable hobby.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Our Fathers and Their Tenement.

HAVING lately looked into some of the older philosophical writings (and, whatever may have been the comparative excellence of ancient poets, historians, and critics on the fine arts, we are wonderfully in advance of our fathers in all branches of philosophy), I was—as I have frequently been—astonished at the speculations in mist and darkness which frequently occupied their time and tasked their energies. Dialectical study and logomachy must have sharpened their wits; but at the same time turned the edge, so that, though keen, they could not cut as they ought. The puzzling syllogisms of the ancients and those of the middle ages being, when they predicate absurdities, necessarily untrue, may be, by the aid of common-sense, proved to be false. Epimenides declared that all Cretans were liars. Now, if he asserted what was true, he disproved his

statement, for he himself was a Cretan. But the assertion that every Cretan, whenever he spoke, told a lie, is absurd. All may have, occasionally, uttered lies, and if Epimenides had simply declared this, it would have been true, but not wonderful. A grain of corn, said the sophists, constitutes a heap; a drop of wine makes a man drunk; a single grain breaks the back of a camel; and, by an evidently absurd process, this could be proved. One grain of corn, the interrogated person would say, is not a heap, nor two, nor ten, nor a hundred, and so on. But a thousand would be. If it were said, nine hundred and ninety-nine are not a heap, but a thousand are, then the one grain would constitute a heap. The only common-sense view of the matter is, that one thousand grains form a heap of a certain size, and all the parts are certain proportions thereof. One hundred are a tenth-part, fifty a twentieth, and one a thousandth-part. "A thing does not move where it is, nor where it is not; consequently, there is no such thing as motion." Space and time exist in a series of infinitely minute portions; and nothing can be said respecting the moving in or out of these; but a thing can and will move in any appreciable portion of space or time. Space, generally speaking, is continuous; while, in respect of its particular parts, it is not so. The same may be said of time. In this sense,

time does not progress. A point of time is a point in duration, and there it is fixed. If time moved onward, it would not, of course, remain where it was. Hence, the first moment in the year 1000 would not be so many years, hours, &c. since. Indeed, if time moved onward there would be no past time. Strictly speaking, we ourselves do not move onward, (and it may serve as a parallel for some of the puzzles of the ancients) our bodies do not become older. In fact, the older we seem to be, the newer we become ; for we are changing every moment. The corporeal part is altered, renewed, furnished with new kinds, which exhibit new characteristics. If the materials which constitute us to-day, have been almost entirely gained within a year, how can these be as old as what existed a year before ? The body then, in one respect, is constantly made new.

The puzzling verbal compositions invented by the ancients for the bewildering of misty intellects, were generally framed of matters beyond human knowledge, or of false statements, or of truth confounded with falsehood. Protagorus taught logic to a young man who was bound by agreement to pay, when properly instructed, a sum of money to his master. The test was to be the obtaining, by pleading, a case in a court of law. Protagorus (having waited, as he thought, long enough) threatened an action for the amount ; and

said, "I am sure to win; for if you lose, I shall receive what the judge will award; and if you gain, you must pay the sum which was agreed." On which the other replied, "If I lose, I am bound, according to our agreement, to pay nothing; and if I gain, I will abide by the decision of the judge." In both cases, the disputants included the judge's decision, which did not belong to the original arrangement. In innumerable instances, valuable time and highly-gifted intellects were engaged in toiling after mere trifles. Thus, such fine minds as those of Aquinas and Duns Scotus were compelled to grope in dark holes and corners, instead of being led out to investigate and admire the wonders of creation..

But I will turn from trifles which have, almost unbidden, presented themselves, after having given a brief conclusion, predicated agreeably with the principle on which many of the ancient syllogisms were formed. Man is a wonderful compound of spirit and matter; water is matter; hence, man is a compound of spirit and water. On a former occasion, I referred to our "great house." I will now look at the notions of the ancients respecting it. When, by the euphrasy of science, our vision has been purged, and the mind enabled to contemplate facts, we are surprised that mankind had not before discovered what, to us, appears self-evident. How extremely puerile do the mundane and other

philosophical systems of the Greeks and Romans appear to the scientific of the present day! Many in that age were, as I have observed, learned, possessing high intellectual skill; but being influenced by education, by association, and the example of others, they turned a deaf ear, generally, to the voice of reason. It was not the smallest indication of their deafness and blindness, when they attempted to prove that this earth was a plane. Many a grave inquisition had been held on this subject; many a problem and many a syllogism constructed in its defence; many a learned disquisition penned; many an eloquent and unanswerable oration delivered; and the man who would have dared to assert, as an article of his belief, the rotundity of the world, would have been laughed at as a lunatic. Some of the unanswerable arguments against him would have been—"If your opinion were true, every one in walking would be going either up or down hill." "Every person would be higher and yet lower than others." "Some would be walking with their heads upwards, others with their heads downwards." It would be triumphantly asked—"Could you walk in an inverted position, with your feet against the roof of a room?" The confession of a negative would, probably, leave the speculatist a convert to the popular scheme.

Agreeably with the ancient theory, the world

was a plane surface, and had, of course, a boundary, so that one might go to the edge and look over. It is marvellous that no one should have actually gone and examined with his own eyes this wondrous fact. How was it that great generals in their expeditions, and travellers in their wanderings, never arrived at the terminus, and read, in characters that could not be mistaken, on the sign-board of nature, "Thus far mayst thou go, but no farther"? Here was a belief almost universally held, relating to what might have been easily tested; and yet no one was so adventurous as to break down the barrier between ignorance and knowledge, or to dissipate the mists that lay between theory and experience. The attraction, one would think, in that direction, must have been marvellously great. There is nothing equal to it in modern times. The North-West Passage is a mere geographical plaything compared with that. A man might have gone (agreeably with the popular theory) and looked over the margin of the earth! He might have lowered a plumb-line to discover whether the cliffs inclined outward or otherwise. He might himself have been let down in a basket; and, if a geologist, he might have battered the side-face of nature, and brought up specimens of the great wall, built as a barrier against clouds and chaos. He might have seen what he never saw before—

the blue vault of heaven below him as well as above; so that if his basket-rope had broken, he would have gone to the sky beneath; or, stopping at a point midway, have revolved, on his own account, within the concave sphere! He might, at night, have seen stars beneath him, which would have been a novel and wondrous sight. He might have known, from an examination of the boundary wall, whether the seas were well secured, so as to prevent the water from flowing over; and whether the mighty cisterns were tight, or, on the contrary, considerable leakage existed, to the great discomfort and damage of the inhabitants (if such there were) of a lower tier. Whether, also, the rivers, or some of them, flowed outwards, forming magnificent cascades; or whether they were carefully turned back on the land. Whether the sun and moon, on account of the near approach to them, would not seem to be of immense size; and whether the stars stuck in the blue vault would not be discovered to be real lamps. Whether the adamantine surface of the concave sphere would ascend or descend (constituting a scene of surprising beauty and magnificence) close to, or at a considerable distance from, the margin of the earth. Whether, also, the music of the spheres might not be there heard in surpassing harmony and grandeur. Many other speculations, of an equally novel and exciting kind, might have

engaged their attention, so that, one would think, they could not have rested until they had sent out an expedition for the purpose of surveying the boundary line.

CHAPTER XXX.

Natural Cogitations.

THE eyes of most persons must be open to the fact that mankind are gradually moving onward to higher, and consequently, more extensive and accurate views of existence. They were formerly guided by appearances,—they are beginning to be influenced by realities. “The sun rises.”—The belief in this was a belief in one portion of a great system of error. “The earth moves” is a part of a vast system of a contrary kind. The former, the moving sun and moon, the plane-surface earth, the solid, concave, revolving sphere, the various stories of the heavens—affected and regulated, in all their branches, philosophy, poetry, and the speculative parts of religion. Indeed, this being the established system, it was useless, even if a man knew better, to teach what he knew. The hearers or readers would not comprehend his teaching. Thus, the writers of the Sacred Scrip-

tures (whatever may have been their abstract knowledge) referred to this system as correct, because it was apparently so. By degrees, however, education is bringing about an important change, exhibiting to man—on the other side of the veil—the real character of the universe.

Look at the belief of our forefathers, five centuries since! The inhabitants of the world were supposed to be comparatively few. All who were not within the pale of Papal government were comparatively insignificant in numbers, and less than insignificant in merit. The Pope was the god of the world; and, as the world comprehended nearly all creation, this wondrous personage was, pretty nearly, the god of the universe. The Virgin Mary was Queen of heaven and earth. She was present in all parts of the inhabited universe—which was almost (as far as material beings were concerned) comprised in Europe and the East; while her ears were open to the communications of every son and daughter of the Church. The "Great Head" ruled by his vicegerent, the Bishop of Rome. That the former never had any official communication with the latter did not affect the matter, except to throw a deeper mystery on the subject, and to make it a more worthy object of "Catholic Faith." The Almighty Being (who was generally, by painters, complimented with a triple crown and pontifical robes, as the highest honour that could be paid to Him) was seated in a

chair of state so many hundreds of miles above the surface of the earth ! Here, then, with the regions for pure spirits and disembodied beings, was the whole of creation ! What marvel if the notions respecting particular parts were false, when the whole was false ? How different is this from the modern system, founded on undeniably true principles of geography, geology, and astronomy ! Our globe, of great antiquity, forming a small portion of a system of planetary worlds : our sun, with its attendant orbs, but one among thousands of suns visible to the naked eye. As we rise higher, the prospect amazingly increases,—numberless orbs, in harmonious movement, exhibit the power of the Great Creator. Ascending still higher in immeasurable space, millions of luminaries through the aid of optical instruments, burst on the view. Let the imagination soar as it will, and travel in this direction or that, there is no apparent boundary. Millions of times the distance between our sun and the earth, and millions of ages employed in the flight, would not, probably, carry the explorer from one end of the universe to the other ! While beyond, around, within the whole,—boundless, infinite, eternal—is the Great God, the Creator and Governor of all ! Surely, there must be an amazing difference between the merely human speculations—the interpretations and theories that would harmonize with the former, and those which would harmonize with the latter !

CHAPTER XXXI.

Divers Lucubrations.

I HAVE recently been induced, by a mere accident (which is of no interest to the reader), to speculate on the points in which a barbarous and civilized people agree, and to inquire if genius belong to both. The mind is, of course, created before, and independent of, the accidents which affect it. Nature does not regulate accidents, but these regulate nature. Hence, genius must exist in all ages and countries; but as man corporally is stunted in the chilly Polar Regions, so is he mentally degraded in adverse circumstances.

What is genius? The difference between a mind endowed with, and another destitute of, genius, seems to be that one perceives existences through the medium of the senses merely; the other with the eye of the mind. One discovers slowly by observation and experience; the other, by a glance. The latter is endowed with such

mighty powers and delicate sensibilities that it perceives, and even seems to feel, all the laws and harmonies of nature. It works, almost unconsciously, agreeably with the rules of eternal consistency and harmony, and, at the same time, furnishes rules for the guidance of others. As Nature reveals herself, in her native perfection, to Genius, so Genius reveals her (as nearly as possible) under the same aspect. The man of genius does not trick out his mental imagery with the low adornments of art. He describes as he sees, and expresses as he feels. The unfading, and, indeed, it may be added, the increasing brightness of Shakespeare's reputation seems to have arisen from this cause. He thought naturally, and wrote as he thought. His conceptions, in the daylight of his genius, were beautifully tinted by Nature herself; and thus he produced noble poetry out of subjects which, to common minds, would have yielded ordinary prose.

But, it may be asked, what is poetry? Poetry, perhaps, exists in (though it does not consist of) emotion. Poetry is not necessarily connected with earth or with man. It may exist, and doubtless does, among the highest created intelligences. In man it beams forth amidst the excitement of passion and feeling. As the sun, shining through vapours, is encircled by a halo—so poetry, shining forth in man, is encircled by the halo of emotion.

Poetry may be descriptive, but it deals not in ordinary description. It is not philosophy; it meddles not with the causes of things. It is not history; it deals not with relations of facts. It takes, for instance, some prominent event, and adorns it with its own inventive adorning. It takes the brilliant edge of a cloud, but cares little about the formation or the nature of the cloud. It connects with what is seen, the beautiful which is not seen—unearthly visions, perfect qualities, forms and aspects that delight and enchant the abstract sense. It creates plains of light, regions of bliss, celestial cities; and, on the border-land, between earth and heaven, raises magnificent architecture—sublime temples, lofty, and dazzlingly beautiful, with columns of pearls and capitals of gold, flashing the rays from an unclouded sun. It creates the pure, blue, glassy heavens into one vast temple-roof, groined with rainbows, and bossed with clusters of stars!

Poetry exhibits the things of earth in their native loveliness, unobscured by the smoke and dust of this busy world, whether in delicate and mingled tints, or bright and gorgeous; whether as plains of coloured light, or dropping in gems, or bursting out of the exhaustless treasury of splendour and beauty.

Poetry, like faith, is admitted where reason dares not tread. And, in the midst of natural

darkness and apparent vacuity, her torch enables her to behold wondrous things. As Faith endows a man with new vision, so Poetry endows her votaries with new eyes, new ears—in fact, new senses. Secondary is grafted on ordinary sense. Thus he beholds richer tints in flowers than are discerned by the common eye; more beauty of form and colour in shrubs and trees; a brighter verdure in meadows; more brilliancy in gushing fountains, streams, and waterfalls. He is enchanted with the displays of Nature's taste and creative power in the lofty and majestic mountain, with the vast and varied panorama spread around it. He could gaze for ever (as it seems to him) on the shifting lights and shadows—the varying tints of the magnificent heavens. And, when the sky is veiled in clouds, he looks above (if he sees not an opening, he makes one) to the azure vault, the region and throne of splendour. He gazes in ecstasy on the exhibitions of the Creator's conceptions—in the immeasurably deep, the ever-brilliant, starry skies—the twinkling points that guide the imagination to wondrous magnitude and glory.

The poet looks on himself as an inhabitant, not of a district merely, but of the world—of the universe—of the visible and invisible. Poetry is ubiquitous. She is, as it were, a spirit of light, that sees clearly in the midst of the deepest shade or most dazzling splendour; though, sometimes,

she purposely shuts her eyes, and at others, cannot describe what she beholds. No artist can paint the sun. The artist's luminary is not luminous; and the poet's words are, sometimes, far beneath his conceptions.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Beasts, Fowls, and other Hobbies.

I WAS engaged for more than an hour, yesterday, in looking for a paper; afterwards it was found in another direction. One of my house-maids, who "dusts" (or undusts) my library, on being asked about it, said that she saw it in her "dust-pan." I reproved her for allowing it to be in such a position, when, with much simplicity, she said she did not know it was there. I could not, I confess, perceive any discrepancy between seeing and knowing; but being rejoiced at the discovery of the lost sheep, I said nothing.

I have had the good fortune (if it may be so termed) of being acquainted with many eccentric characters. One of these was wounded in a tiger-hunt, in Bengal. Necessity compelled him to submit to the amputation of one of his legs. He caused this important part of himself to be preserved in spirits; and when able to perform the

duties of chief mourner, he, attended by a train of his friends, followed it to the grave. Very singularly, some years after, when in Canada, his other leg, which had been injured and partially cured, became so diseased, that he was obliged to part with it; and, in an open carriage, accompanied by multitudes of people, he followed that also to the grave. He lived in England for several years after this event, and often visited Brook Abbey, my residence. He used to boast that the Colossus of Rhodes was nothing in comparison with him, for his feet were planted in both hemispheres. On some occasions, however, when he regretted the loss of his understandings, he used to say that he was a mere shield and crest, having lost his "supporters."

I had intended to say something about hobbies, and had prepared a flourishing exordium for my chapter; but I have almost forgotten it. However, this is something like it; and if the reader would suggest a different reading, that, doubtless, was what I meant to say. The taste of man is so various—its capabilities so easily adapted to circumstances, that it can bestride a mountain, or ride on the wings of a butterfly. It can construct a beautiful pagoda on the back of a lady-bird, and travel in it, and visit all the insect tribes. It can go with the mole under the earth, with the nautilus on the glassy

waves, or with the eagle into the higher regions of the air. Thus it may select a hobby of any guise or size.

A very beautiful hobby for ladies is horticulture. It takes them out in the morning air, (ladies, of course, never lie a-bed in the morning,) and then their hobby is blooming in all the colours of the rainbow, and sparkling with dew-drops. This pet, however, hibernates ; but, when the warm rays of the sun play about it, and the breezes of spring whisper to it, it awakes, and arises in vigour and beauty.

Wealth is a favourite hobby ; indeed, when decked in its ordinary trappings, it is very gorgeous. It is, however, a sad tripper ; many a man has fallen from it and broken his neck.

Eating and drinking, as we well know, are the hobbies of some persons. Both these are defined as means to an end—the end is the production of health, the prolongation of life. It has been said, “As is the cause so is the effect.” Hence, if a certain amount of nutriment will produce so much vigour and health, a double quantity will make a man doubly strong and healthy. But everything in respect of human beings is relative. Not the largest amount, but the best proportion, is adapted for the greatest good. Gluttony is a disease of the body ; epicurism of the mind ; and drunkenness a disease of both.

There is a very persevering, hard-working hobby—a kind of hunter, used in the pursuit of honorary distinctions: and, as the huntsman, when he returns from successful toil, carries behind him the head and antlers of the captured stag, so does the rider of this favourite hobby, in some such manner, postfix the initials of the hard-earned marks of merit.

Doubtless, there is a great variety of hobbies among agriculturists. Very discordant are the tastes of these connoisseurs—as much so as the noises in a cattle-show. Some are for Leicesters, and others South Downs; some for Devons, and others Durhams; but every one has his particular hobby—his pet, for the adornment and glorification of which, at the annual dinner (after he has culled from the “creature comforts”) he culls the choicest flowers (field and hedge-flowers) of rhetoric; and when the wheel of time has carried him on, from the prandial to the post-prandial era, he showers bumpers on his favourite; and, with his latest breath (on this occasion), though impeded and finally mastered by hiccups, he tells the oft-repeated tale of the unparalleled virtues of his inestimable hobby!

And now we go from beasts of the earth to fowls of the earth,—“fowls of the earth” because they don’t fly;—and, on the field of vision, before the eye of the mind, we have drawn out for review

a glorious army of bipeds, which, individually or collectively, are decidedly hobbies. Here we have (but time would fail one to give half the catalogue) Polish hens and Dorking hens, Labrador and Aylesbury ducks, gold and silver-laced (strait-laced and otherwise) bantams of Burmah; pea-fowls and *guinea*-fowls—the latter scorning to part with themselves for “one pound one;” Egyptian geese and Norfolk turkeys; golden and silver pheasants; silver-pencilled Hamburgs; fowls from Hong-Kong, Chittagong, and divers other regions of the earth—not forgetting black, white, buff, &c. Cochin-China fowls; also pigeons, having among their various orders or professions, nuns, tumblers, and trumpeters, with *gamblers* that lay nothing but—eggs; divers other birds, speckled and spangled, frizzled but not grizzled, yellow, fawn, cinnamon, purple, pure lemon, virgin buff—all, and more than all, the colours of the rainbow; some with gold and silver beards, others with white topknots; matrons and sires, pullets and cockerels, sisters and brothers, aunts and uncles, grand’pas and grandmamas; some (as I have observed) from the east and the west, the north and the south; from Egypt and Ethiopia, from “Araby the blest,” and Sierra Leone the cursed; from Java and Japan, Ashantee and Malabar, Mysore and Bangalore—a perfect babel of screeching and screaming, cawing and cackling,

as many languages as tongues : and all these creatures admirable for real or fancied endowments—for shape, plumage, gait, tail, or no tail—a proud and dazzling array ; but most of them so fat that they are anything but specimens of “animated nature.” Now, of all these, the genuine amateur will give you the origin, country, laws, government, history, sympathies, antipathies, &c.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Poor Human Nature.

WE may be proud of our intellectual and corporeal character as human beings—the lords of creation—the rulers of the birds and beasts to which I have referred; but, among ourselves, we may confess that we, or some of us, in some respects, on some occasions, are anything but rational and reasonable. Many of the imperfections to which I refer, arise from principles which are not, in themselves, faulty. For instance, there is naturally in the human mind a tendency to alternation; sorrow is succeeded by joy, pain by pleasure. These changes occur as certainly as the oscillations of a pendulum. Novelty is a powerful impulse. The mind flies under its influence to the utmost extent of hope, and then away to the furthest verge of despondency: without some new impulse, or the substitution of reality for speculation, the alternations become less and

less until the excitement is subsided, and the mind is settled down in apathetic indifference. Generally speaking, however, we are subject to a great variety of influences, which, sometimes clashing, neutralize one another, and sometimes uniting, impel the mind with considerable violence. Mental phenomena are, in some respects, so mechanical, and in others so occult, that people generally, in attempting to philosophize, are almost sure to be wrong. Thus, it is usual to attribute to the marvellous what is very simple, and to supernatural what is decidedly natural. Quacks of all varieties (though, perhaps, ignorant of the philosophy of the matter) are quite aware that this defect of humanity is their best friend and patron. A person may be (at first, merely in imagination) disordered in health. This conviction causes many anxious and gloomy thoughts. He fancies that he looks ill, and this fancy prevents him from looking well. His friends, perhaps, confirm the information which he had received from his glass. He thinks that his pulse is weak and irregular; and these defects are increased by his nervous feelings. He believes that his appetite is decreasing; and his excitement still further diminishes his disposition for eating. Thus he becomes in a very short time, timid, feeble, and decidedly ill. Some influence which would have checked the current of his thoughts would, perhaps, have

effected a cure : temporary, if founded on error ; permanent, if based on reason and truth.

The patient to whom I have referred is, probably, romantic ; indeed, if he were not so, he would not be deluded. Ordinary physicians he thinks are liable to err, and ordinary medicines are attended with risk. He hears, happily, of some golden elixir ; celestial pills ; dust shaken from angel's wings—a rare and inestimable powder ! empyrean drops from the lamps in the vault of heaven ; manna from the encampment-ground of the ancient Israelites ; or, perhaps, a wondrous specific—dew-drops mesmerised and rigidified by moon-beams—never known to fail ! Hope raises her head and smiles cheerfully on him ; he feels half-cured before he tries the miraculous agent. Without delay he procures the inestimable treasure—he incorporates it with his own substance, and finds himself a new man. His pains are fled ; his gloom is departed—he knows not and cares not whither. Now, a great deal of this result must be attributed to mental excitement. The belief that he would be, and a consciousness that he has been, improved in his condition, have raised his animal spirits so much that he triumphs over, and forgets (unhappily for a short time only) all his pains and sorrows.

Let us take a case of another kind, and imagine a pilgrim on his way to the shrine of some notable

saint. Behold him on his weary progress, adding, perhaps, to the unavoidable fatigue, some voluntary suffering. At last he arrives at the holy spot. His toils and dangers are ended. The consciousness that he has performed the great feat of his life—something which thousands had desired, but could not accomplish—that he has reached the consecrated ground, the gilded horizon of his hopes—that he has, as it were, set his foot in Elysium, after the long and doleful passage of Purgatory—fills him with inexpressible delight. And, really, (if one may be allowed to digress) what an amazingly great and important occurrence! The tour of Simple Simon to the bones of Simon Simple! How would the event stand out, in magnitude and brilliancy, in the vista of ages, two hundred millions of years hence! This is, surely, worth the being created for! One can almost imagine that archangels would look on such an honoured spirit (when he, too, had left his bones behind him) with veneration fringed with envy. However, Simple Simon knows not the immediate cause of the revulsion of feeling to which I have referred; but he attributes it chiefly to the sacred influence of the place, and the balm which is poured into his heart by the potent influence of the personage whom he had come to honour. It would be no wonder if, sometimes, bodily ailments were driven away during this preternatural excite-

ment. But, whatever be the result, the virtues of the saint are extolled, and one fool becomes the cause of many. The saint, perhaps, all this while is very innocent of the matter—knowing nothing of what is transpiring on the earth; and very probably has not, and never had, a bone within a hundred miles of the place!

I might here mention (as so many species of the genus to which I have referred) the illusions and delusions that affect the mind, the nervous system, and, indirectly, in some instances (for better or worse, for a shorter or longer period) the health of the body; but they are so various that, if I were particularly to describe them, they would require many chapters; and, besides, not many of them appear to be general. They are confined to certain periods, or districts, or classes of persons.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Another Phase of the same Subject.

AN article is a substantive, and yet an article is not a substantive. Thus the various meanings of words occasion much uncertainty. One half (I speak within compass) of the diversity of opinion and practice in the world arises from verbal obscurity. No wonder if, occasionally, both in theory and duty, we be guilty of "short comings." But what does this mean? A man cannot come from any point to himself; and if he moves from one point to another, he *goes*. If, in relation to any point, his goings are short, in relation to that point he does not go at all. Hence, without being dogmatical, (for dogmatism is fit only for dog-days, when it is too warm for mental exertion; or for the dog-days of a man's feelings, which, in some cases, are perennial,) "short comings," if they could exist, would have no existence at all. The expression has a factitious meaning; but,

having nothing more, it is little less than cant. Particular words, sentences, musical compositions, paintings, statues, symbolical representations, places, &c., may, by association, be made extremely expressive—powerful in exciting emotions, passions, &c.; while they may, of themselves, be naturally bare and insignificant—as much so as the twig on which a swarm of bees might cluster.

An intelligent child, who is taught some of the great principles of religion and morals, is comparatively free from the conventionalities which gather around the mind in its rising into an acquaintance and a conformity with the world and its systems. In the questions which are sometimes put by the young inquirer to its parents, a flood of light—of logical consistency and truth—bursts forth and demonstrates that conventionalism and reason are, occasionally, very widely separated. Of course, the untrammelled mind is checked, and brought under the conventional yoke to which its elders are subjected.

With the acknowledged imperfection of words and the human intellect, with imperfection tinging, discolouring, and distorting everything around us, we have a still further instance of defect in the imaginative painting and eager longing of certain minds for perfection—some system free from the mists and clouds which are inseparable from all

human systems. When I look around on the world, and behold the flickering lights and shadows, the chameleon-hues of men's opinions—one, perhaps, conscientious inquirer embracing one strange doctrine, and another another; one man running upwards or downwards through the whole gamut of opinions, seeking perfect harmony, and finding discord only; one, to-day a Churchman, to-morrow a Dissenter, the next a Presbyterian, then a Quaker, then a Socinian, then a sceptic, then a Roman Catholic, and then coming back, dreadfully disheartened and jaded, to his original faith some, again, in one district, shifting from one point to the opposite; and others, in another district, or perhaps in the same, taking a contrary direction: I am induced to suppose that all these, in their movements, cannot be guided by one great agent—the principle of truth; but that these marvellous results are produced by a mistaken conception that clear, undoubted, logical consistency—truthful perfection—must exist, and may be found somewhere. One part of this belief is correct; it does exist in Deity, and might be found by man—if he like Deity, were perfect! The best advice that can be given to persons inclined for a speculative tour, is—Stay where you are, rather than go on the “tramp.” If you can vary a little, beneficially (for there is no rule without an exception), do so; but do not set out on a

pilgrimage after a phantom; for if you do, you will have much weariness of the flesh and spirit, and no advantage to compensate for a tithe of the toil. "But," it will be said, "some people possess such a morbid disposition of mind that they must be engaged with stirring novelties, or the disease would fret and fume itself into insanity." Then let them go on, rather than plunge into the Slough of Despond or the fires of frenzy; but let the ground be forsaken by all others. It would be comparatively good for one class—positively bad for the other. The latter may employ their time in acquiring useful knowledge, and performing useful acts. They may be good Christians and good members of society, without dazzling themselves with "new lights," or listening to some deluding orator in a tub, or prophet on a tripod.

CHAPTER XXXV.

My Paternal Ancestor.

THIS worthy man, who was for some time Dean of Durham, and flourished in wealth and song, in the reign of that multiform character, Queen Elizabeth, was rather learned for his day; and though he lived in obscure times, was tolerably clear-headed. He published several books. One was "A Caveate against Astrologers, Alchemistes, Logisters, and such other Perversers of the Truthe." Another, "A Demonstracione of the Rotunditie of the Earthe." One can imagine what a storm of opprobrious epithets must have burst on him from the watch-towers of the astrologers, the dens of the alchemists, and the schools of the flats; the latter, admiring only a plane surface, abhorred the idea of a sphere. The old gentleman entered into controversy with them; but with what result I know not, except that it evidently ruffled the feathers of his moral faculty, (if we

may suppose that faculty to be fledged,) and caused him to look as through a glass darkly, on some part of human nature. He seems to have had before the eye of his mind when he wrote the following verses, some contemporary who made up in conceit what he lacked in principle :—

“ On a certaine personne, with goodlie commentes on hys waies.

“ The mann from treuth and reason turneth quite ;
He loveth wronge, he hateth what is righte ;
Stoppeth hys eares, nor careth what is saide,
Lyke desserte-birde, hydeth hys sillie heade.

He lerneth not hys waies in wisdomes schoole ;
He thynketh and he speketh as a foole ;
He earneth not a laurell, as I trowe,
But rather capp and belles to grace his browe.

And yett conceite dothe holde hym verrie highe,
Perchaunce hys heade doth reache unto the skye !
But small and poore pertayneth to hys lotte,
As raynbowe in the drillinge of a moppe.

He loveth slander, and is verrie lowe ;
He knoweth nothings as he ought to knowe ;
Hys dirtie speche 'gainst all would gladlie poke,
As chymnie-sweepe that soyleth cleanlie folke.

And, hence, beware ! let everie goodlie harte
From foule contaminacione keep aparte ;
Leste, by degrees, thy glorie it shoulde take,
As fylth doth mar the beautie of the glassie lake.”

I make an extract from his first-mentioned work, because it serves to describe one of our hobbies. “A wonderful imposture in some ages

was Chivalrie—Knight-Errantrie. From this roote springeth the orderres of Knightes Templers, Knightes of the Holie Crosse, Knightes of Hierusalem, &c., makinge the age a benited one; for altho, in somme parte, the purpose was goode, yett in sundrie maneres the practyce was badde."

In a former chapter, I have said a few words on the verbal puzzles of logicians. In my ancestor's work on "Logisters," &c., I find a paragraph on the same subject. As it is much better than my own, I make no apology for transcribing it. "Ye wil see that, by their doinges, they seke to confounde truthe with falsehoode, and induce a mann to take one for an other. Then laughe they at hym as muche as to sai, 'What a foole ye are!' but, trulie, in foolinge others, they foole themselves, so that at laste, they knowe not what is righte or what wronge. Thus Parmenides, Chrysippus, and their scholares, affirmed that one grain of sande did constitute a hepe, one grain of corne did breake the backe of a cammel; for, quoth they, the laste that is added dothe it. Now, I sai, if the one graine, independantlie of others, dothe it—take away the reste, and see what the one graine will doe. And so they sai that Epimenides, a Cretan, asserted that al Cretanes are liars; consequentlie, he lied, and the Cretanes are not liars; but, if Cretanes are not liars, Epimenides tolde the truthe, and the Cretanes are liars. Thus doe they

and their disciples in presente daies, involve themselves in labyrinthes of their own inventione—ever learninge, and never cominge to a knowledge of the truthe. To sai that al menn of a countrie are alwais liars is false ; but to sai that some menn of a countrie are sometimes liars, may be verie trew, and free from any difficultie. Motione, say they, is not where a thinge is, nor where it is not : but if it existe, it muste be in one, hence it dothe not existe. But motione, like unto time, abideth not : and to sai that, because nether of these dothe what it cannot doe, it existes not—is a prooffe, not of wisdome, but of folie.”

My ancestor had evidently been irritated at the conduct of some person who had received a communication intended for himself ; and he suffered his feelings to evaporate in a sort of poetical effusion:—

*“How a certaine man did hepe for hys owne use what is no
waies hys owne propertie.*

“The worlde al beautifull would bee,
With flowerie meades, and sparkling streames,
And blushing groves, and brighte blue sea,
And scenes, perchaunce, unmatched in dreames ;
Butt, by the lawe of nature, it is fixed,
Sterilitie with beautie shal be mixed.

The worlde most pleasaunte it would bee,
If al did speake and acte aright—
With honour and integrite,
In wisdome’s goodlie garmente dight ;
Butt, by the lawe of nature, it is fixed,
Dishonestie with vertue shall be mixed.

And soe what is, and stil muste bee,
 Is by exampell brought to lighte—
 There is, forsoothe, no honestie
 In holding what is not our righte.
 A greedie mann by honour is not lette,
 He kepeth al that goeth to his nette.

If missives bee, by chaunce, missente,
 And wel he knoweth the mystake,
 Hys minde by evill warped and bente,
 No restitution wil he make,
 The hungrie mann by honour is not lette,
 He kepeth al that goeth to hys nette.

If any one of suche foule dedes
 Complaine, alas! he heedeth nott :
 Honour is quicke with innosense,
 It dieth else, and is forgott.
 And thus the mann by vertue is not lette,
 He kepeth al that goeth to hys nette."

My ancestor seems to have had a vein of humour among his other veins. The following was not printed, but among his papers :—

"Divers profitable receiptes for goode howswives.

"Egges shulde be boyled in hott water. In respectes of time, yee shal take that portione which is moste sutable for them. When enuff done, yee shal open and eate them.

"With regarde to peces of meate, wether roste or boyled, yee mai sai they are ready when done enuff.

"When yee plie a bellowse, yee muste not putte the nose therof into the fire. For yee muste doe unto others as yee wolde they shulde doe to you.

"Washe al the dirtie waterre, and make it cleane, that it be straitwaie used againe.

"When a howswif cooketh a goose, let her make this humbel and profiteable reflectione, that that is not the onlie goose that deserveth a basting."

My ancestor was the author of an address to a robin, which was translated into Latin by, I elieve, one of the learned Du Moulins:—

"To a Robine,

"A constant attendant at canonicall prayers.

*"O robine, friende to sacred lais,
Accepte the tribute offmy praise.
Thou our quier's subchauntor art,
And in our worshippe bearest a parte.
The stainesse scarlet of thy breaste
Rivals the colure of our veste.
In springe thou sweetlie cheer'st us with thy layes,
And driv'st awai the gloome of wintrie dayes.*

*But in what strain, thou scarlette mate,
Shal I thy prayeses celebrate?
For underneath thy forme maye lie
Some being from the upper skie,
Adorned like thou with glisteninge winges,
Who thus to Godde his homage bringes;
And, when the hollow arches of the fane
Thundre with prayeses of Jehova's name,
In ecstacie he chaunts his rivall layes,
Clapps his brighte winges, and joins in sacrede prayse.*

*But if a birde—a robine treu—
What is youre faithe, fanatick crewe?
For if a birde, by natur wilde,
Is made by hymns devoute and milde,
Are not yee, through zeal precotious,
Made by hymnes stil more ferocious?
Birdes sweetlie in the tempel spende their dayes,
But ye are driven out by sounds of prayse.*

Hail ! songster, that dost nevvver tyre,
A patterne meete for al the quier.
No strict precentour in his booke—
As blotte on thy faire fame—could note
Attendaunce late, or absence ether,
For thou art criminall in nether.
But when the risin or the settin sunne
Bringes holie prayer, then is thy work begun.
Now in the tempel hoppin on with haste,
And now hie soaring in the midel space,
Thou littest on the organ's loftie pile ;
Thy eager songe, which conquerest all, meanwhile
Roles forthe, in notes sonorous, cleare, and shrill,
Temper in the solemn musike at thy wil.

For this, gode robine, for thy merit grete,
A pious boie sum krumbes for thee to eate,
Hath gladly sprinkled. Hoppin here and there,
After the sacrede service, pick thy cheere.
For, while rewardes belongs to those who singe,
Thy labore some reward wil justlie bringe."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

About Hobbies.

FROM divers matters, including cookery and "profitable" monitions thereon, we may turn to speculations on other matters of taste, which also may be profitable. We will, if the reader please, attend to hobbies; the first whereof are philosophical ones. These are beautiful steeds, very sure-footed; and some, like the Pegasus of the poets, are winged. They mount above this sublunary, subsolar, or subastral world, and carry their riders on the highways and byways of creation. That was a beautiful steed of Copernicus, which conveyed his master round the world. That of Galileo did the same, and enabled his rider to behold the heavenly bodies within one thirtieth-part of the distance required for previous observers. Those belonging to Kepler and Newton—indeed, to a constellation of star-gazers, have opened to the astonished view of mankind the laws and wonders of the universe.

Every department of philosophy can boast of its appropriate hobbies. There are some that descend into the depths of the earth ; others, into those of the sea. Some traverse plains and swamps ; others, mountains and precipices. Some frequent the tropics, amidst the blaze of sunbeams and the gay productions of nature ; others, the poles, amidst icy mountains and almost colourless varieties of creation, excepting the occasionally shifting and gorgeous Aurora. However, even in the regions of philosophy, it is not all bright and clear and truthful. Some so-called philosophical hobbies are anything but what they should be. They are sad beasts—half-brothers, probably, of Balaam's loquacious steed. Talk they can ; but what more can they do ? They can endanger their rider's understanding by grazing it against a wall, and then cry out (as an excuse for such liberties), "Am I not thine"—hobby, "on which thou hast ridden ever since I was thine until this day?" When I said that philosophical hobbies were "half-brothers" of their ancestor, I meant that as, on a charitable estimate, an individual of the asinine species is half good and half bad, their relationship applies to the latter. I confess that I have always had a kindly, commiserating feeling for Balaam's charger. I have thought him a well-intentioned, good-principled animal, but badly used. As for the perverse, philosophical creatures

to which I have referred, there is little excuse for them. They run, almost infallibly, in the wrong direction; and if they have (or if they ought) to mount a hill, they are almost sure to "jib," and "backen" their riders into a ditch.

I ought to say something of medical hobbies—a most numerous race, embracing all varieties, from the highest range of science, down to the lowest of quackery; but it would be a great dose, and, whether ill or well, we turn instinctively from physic. Perhaps something pleasing and gentle, which would tend to "settle the stomach," would be preferable. Painting—that is a beautiful hobby, and so is music, and so is, I was going to say, poetry. However, poetry really is; but, I had promised to speak of that only which would soothe the mind, and make it calm and delightful as a summer evening smiling on a glassy lake; whereas, a poetic hobby, though frequently beautiful and much admired, is a restless, prancing, capering steed; one on which you can never depend any further than to know that no dependance can be placed on it. I need only mention that, if you wish to preserve a good digestion, rosy health, and a tranquil spirit, do not, on any account, mount a poetic hobby.

And here I may mention (though I shall not say much of) nursery-hobbies. Some of these are, occasionally, so intractable as to throw three riders;

and, if we may judge from the outcry, occasion much bodily harm. Then there is a larger breed (as much larger as a broom-stick is than a walking one), that (marvellous to relate) trot, as on an inclined plane, into the upper regions of the air, prance and caper on the ridges of clouds, and perform more gyrations and evolutions by night than the eagle by day; while roguish imps (formed out of condensed chaos and moonshine) huzza and "cheer on" the mettlesome steed and adventurous rider, who is generally represented as an old dame, with a high conical hat.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

One of the Phases of Credulity.

IF the ancients were wrong (as I have observed in Chapter Twenty-nine) respecting the world itself, the moderns are sometimes so respecting many things in it. And, very strangely, they are most erroneous in what is most intimately connected with themselves. A man will study the works of nature in various departments; ancient mythology and history; the most obscure and erudite questions in any or every branch of knowledge; but he will not study his own anatomical structure, or the phenomena of the mind. Hence, the greatest learning and the greatest ignorance will sometimes be found in the same person. The nervous system and the mind in connection with it are, most certainly, very mysterious in their nature. It has been found, in all ages and countries, that, to a certain extent, mind can operate on mind, or, as it seems, nerve on nerve.

This, generally speaking, is a matter of curiosity rather than utility; but it has been employed, in some instances, for the purpose of leading the credulous into extravagance. I refer, as an illustration (in some of its characteristics, at least), to mesmerism. This, to a certain point, is true; but beyond that, it seems to be mere fancy, misdirected faith, and absurdity. We will look, for a moment, at the three phases of the art. First, the operation of one nervous system on another, so as to produce *coma* or sleep, and rigidity or motion, under the control of the operator. Second, the cure of disease. Third, the capability of beholding things and events, without the ordinary restrictions of space and time. Of these, the first appears to be founded on fact; the second, in a considerable degree, on credulity; the third on little more than involuntary, if not intentional, deception.

Without doubt, cures may be performed in connection with mesmerism; and they have been with holy wells, the tombs of saints, reputed relics of apostles, the handkerchief of St. Veronica—perhaps, the holy coat at Treves; but it was not, in these cases, the things themselves (being generally without even authenticity), but excitement of the mind, and, in connection with it, that of the nervous system, whereby the latter was raised into a preternatural state of vigour,

while life and energy were communicated to the paralysed limb. The muscular is, of course, dependent for its energy on the nervous system. An influence on the mind may diminish corporeal power; while one of a contrary kind may impart vigour, and restore the person to health. This fact has been known in every age. Hope, belief, faith, is commonly the cause of the cure; the visible processes are necessary for generating the feeling.

Certain mechanical results may, doubtless, be connected with mesmerism. For instance, if preternatural rigidity or flexibility be induced, a deformed limb may be straightened, or a dislocated bone replaced. A state of insensibility also may be produced, so that (as with chloroform) surgical operations may be performed without any sensation of pain to the patient.

The professing to behold distant places or future times, stands in a very different relation from that to which I have referred. The latter possesses a visible connection of influences; and, in some respects, the relation of cause and effect; (the effect, it is true, is commonly attributed to a wrong cause;) whereas, the former exhibits no feature of the sort. The semblance of it could be performed by art, and it does not appear how any more than the semblance could be produced. It will remain, of course, with the advocates of

the system, to explain how a *clairvoyante* may behold and describe the central parts of the earth, the farther hemisphere of the moon, the rings of Saturn, or the belts of Jupiter; or, indeed, to go no farther than our own globe (though an increase of distance ought to be no increase of difficulty), how he may (in the spirit, without any letter of introduction) present himself in the midst of the secret councils of the Sultan of Egypt, the Schah of Persia, or the Emperor of Japan!

It is certain that cause and effect must be in immediate connection. Now, in order that the intellectual principle should use its ears or eyes in Turkey, it must go to that country, or Turkey must come to it; unless we suppose (which is very incredible) that some supernatural being would communicate the intelligence. We cannot, therefore, receive the theory, based as it apparently is on mere fiction.

In respect of future events, the difficulty is, if possible, still greater. No one can know what will happen in Australia, for instance, six months hence, without being acquainted with the particulars previously or contemporaneously existing in, or connected with it. He must know the exact spot, the hour or minute, the persons, &c., and not only these, but every occurrence, trifling or important, which preceded, and on which the event, as a part of a series, was dependent. Doubt

or inaccuracy, in respect of any part, would imply, not knowledge, but conjecture. The only other supposition (as in the former case) would be, that the knowledge was dependent on supernatural power. In ordinary cases, such a pretence would be absurd, and we have not now to decide on what is miraculous.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

A Prophet without Patronage.

As I wish well to all who act well, I am frequently made the depository of people's anxieties and hopes. A poor visionary, but in some respects a clever fellow, of a neighbouring town, applied to me some time since to become the president of a Mesmeric Society. I declined the honour; but as I spoke to him courteously, he seems to have fancied that I went with him into all the extravagancies of the system. I have recently received a letter from him, in which he appears to consider me as his patron and himself as my agent. I should have mentioned that the zealous monomaniac had set out on an itinerary through the provinces for the purpose of opening the mental eyes of the blind—or, rather, of blinding those who could but feebly see. His mission, however, seems to have been of a most disheartening character. You shall hear what he says:—

“ People are arrived as far as this—and I scarcely know how to induce them to go farther—they believe that the potent spells of mesmerism will cast a person into a deep sleep, and reduce his limbs to a state of icy rigidity; but the qualifications and objections which, at the same time, are offered, take away (if I may so say) nearly all the beautiful adornments of our heaven-born science, and make it as lanky as a bird denuded of its plumage. They assert that there are many phenomena connected with the human mind and the nervous system; that sleep of a similar or more marvellous kind exists sometimes, without mesmeric agency, while rigidity of the limbs frequently accompanies excitement of the mind; that these effects cannot be produced by our professors, except in persons of morbid constitution and disordered nerves. I tell them that by means of our wonderful art, distracting teeth may be extracted, and other operations performed, without pain to the patient. This they admit; but say it is not a distinctive character of mesmerism, for that chloroform and other agents will produce the same effect,—indeed, will seldom fail, while the other will seldom succeed. I inform them that men of science and influence have patronised our art. They reply that those who are (as they term it) afflicted with *mesmania* are few in number; that the movements or “passes” are childish play, of little or no utility, and very likely, by

frequent practice, to weaken, derange, and even destroy the nervous system and the mind. To all which I say (for reasoning is of little use to such persons)—‘It’s no such thing!’

“I have sometimes endeavoured to prove that marvellous cures have been wrought by mesmerism. But the sceptics immediately say that a torpid state of the nervous system, during an hour, for instance, would not *produce* any particular disease in the healthy, or *remove* it from the unhealthy. They will not admit that, when certain sets of nerves are unable to operate, they are capable of working vigorously. They add that, if a cure is performed, it is before or after the torpor; and owing, not to the operator, but to the person himself. That the removal of warts and other excrescences, by apparently *insufficient* visible processes, is as wonderful as any effects connected with mesmerism. That charms, relics, the tombs of saints, the mysterious incantations of pretended magicians, with other influences which powerfully excite the mind and generate faith—may cause the principle of vitality to be forced to the extremities of the body, the nerves of sensation and action to be raised to a natural tone, so that the deaf may hear, the dumb speak, and the lame walk. Many a man, say they, has been carried to the tomb of a saint. He has thrown down his crutches, and danced in the

vigour of youth and health. They declare therefore, that, whether in charming, relic-gazing, the being touched by sovereigns or subjects, by Mahometan Wallahs, Buddhist devotees, or Popish ascetics—whether the visible means be mesmerism or anything else—it is faith which effects the cure. In answer to all this, I reply, ‘It’s no such thing!’

“ They talk of necromancy or the black art, of witchcraft, enchantment, alchemy, astrology, ‘dreamers of dreams,’ augury, false prophets, animal magnetism, and a train of other matters relating to wonderful feats of magicians, soothsayers, conjurers, sleight-of-hand *artistes*, &c., &c. How these people pretend to unlock the arcana of nature; transport the deluded, encircled in clouds, to distant lands; foretell events, and exhibit the world of spirits. They affirm that these arts were patronised by the credulous among the learned, the designing among the unprincipled, and the simple among the ignorant. To which I reply—as before.

“ Then they say that the Druids attributed mysterious properties, with marvellous powers of healing, to the misletoe. That similar delusions may be found among the superstitions of the Greeks and Romans, the Orientals, and, indeed, almost every nation. That the loadstone has been supposed capable of curing diseases, of conveying the thoughts of a person to those at a distance,

with other marvellous results. That Sir Kenelm Digby wrote of the 'powder of sympathy,' and Bishop Berkeley of 'tar water'—both of which were of wondrous utility to all but the discoverers! That Mesmer, when ill, ran away from his miraculous tub (surrounded as it was by dupes) to drink the waters of Spa. That Paracelsus invented his *elixir vitæ* to effect human immortality; thousands of persons partook of the miraculous fluid, and were healed of their diseases, but Paracelsus himself died at forty! That it is one of the peculiarities of delusion to be insensible to argument: and, as its votaries establish themselves on the ground of faith and mystery, the more mysterious the more credible. Whether it be the delusions of the Mormons or Rappists, the misconceptions and consequent mystery of 'table moving,' the visions of the Family of Faith, the expectation of Johanna Southcote's 'Shiloh,' or the looked-for fulfilment of a postponed prophecy, the deluded zealots nurse their bantlings till they become 'small by degrees, and beautifully less'. To all which I reply, 'It's no such thing!'

"Then I inquire, 'What do you say to clairvoyance?' On which they fairly laugh; point to a host of unfortunate failures; say that a person in most kinds of sleep possesses memory, imagination, &c.; that in some instances he can walk, labour at a mechanical art, solve a mathe-

matical problem, compose poetry, or write scientific papers; that on some occasions the imagination is very active, being capable of beholding distant countries and remote ages. But they spoil this (which seems like a testimony for clairvoyance) by saying that this faculty has power on the materials of the mind only ; that it is, on such occasions, acute in inventing and conjecturing; and, as in other cases, it may be right or wrong. They add that mesmerism, with its miraculous cures and pretended visions, is not only not credible, but not creditable. That it may do for adventurers, quacks, and conjurors. That scientific men reject it, respectable men despise it, and religious men condemn it. By this time I become so indignant as not to condescend to make a reply !

“ Your humble Servant.”

CHAPTER XXXIX.

The Paces of Hobbies and Utilities of Hobbyism.

A THOUGHT or two on the transition of the mind from one subject to another—from place to place, the glancing occasionally “from earth to heaven, from heaven to earth,” has made me half inclined to say something on “mental travelling;” but having engaged to treat of another subject, I must fulfil my contract. Perhaps, if there be no objection, I may introduce the other at the close of the chapter.

Some hobbies (as I have intimated) go very quickly—too much so for the benefit of the rider. Such, of course (however *they* might object to it), should be held by a curb-rein. Others, on the contrary, go not quickly enough. In the latter case, art should be employed to regulate nature. But I do not approve of spurs. The fact is they are rather awkward and barbarous appendages—not comfortable for man or beast. At any rate one

spur (which would be but half the inconvenience) would succeed as well as two: for, as Hudibras most sagely observes, if you get one side of your horse into a brisk trot, the other is sure to follow.

The greater trouble is with fast goers—those which are anxious, *à la* steeple-chase, to attain the goal. They are rash and speculative—will reject a certain gain for the *chance* of obtaining double. The riders seem as if they could never enjoy present time, space, or circumstances—they pant for new acquisitions, as Alexander for a new world to be conquered. They are uneasy where they are, and wish to be anywhere else. They cannot enjoy to-day, but they anticipate bliss on the morrow. Now, as other places, circumstances, and times than what are possessed, are not, of course, theirs—and never will be; so, in reality, they can scarcely be said to enjoy anything but speculations and anticipations.

You perceive that hobby and rider are much alike. Indeed, (as I have observed,) in some mysterious manner one is originated from the other. Not the master from the beast, but the beast from the master—as serpents from Medusa's head, so hobbies are generated from human brains. Afterwards, however, the hobby affects the man. And here I may observe (what doubtless will

surprise many) that some hobbies are deranged or insane;—we can scarcely say, mad; for though we hear, sometimes, of mad dogs, we scarcely do of mad hobbies. Disease, of course, might generate this malady in almost any beast, but veterinary statistics never report cases of madness in hobby-horses. These creatures, however, are affected by a kind of *mania*, and then the owner is a monomaniac. He reasons correctly, perhaps, but his premises are false. For instance, if a piece of antique china, or a scarce book, or a bird, or a tulip, be worth a thousand pounds, it would be a prudent outlay of money to purchase it. But the question should be—Is it really worth that sum? Is not the nominal value occasioned by a feverish spirit of emulation and rivalry, which will—like the baseless fabric of a vision—soon vanish? If there are things prudent and things absurd, do not these extravagancies belong to the latter class?

But it will be said that persons make a large outlay of money for what is almost worthless, in the hope of obtaining a larger sum—they endeavour to enrich themselves by the weaknesses of others. In this case there may be more of sagacity than folly; though it belongs rather to (if any) the money-getting hobby. While money remains in circulation, it is generally usefully engaged; if not in one particular case, yet, perhaps, in the next

It resembles the atmosphere, which sometimes passes over a marshy and sterile country, producing apparently no beneficial results; then it sweeps over a cultivated soil and cities teeming with inhabitants, diffusing health and happiness. Among individuals or families, wealth prodigally spent might bring the previous owners to poverty; but others would possess more than before. Wealth recklessly expended by a nation, among other nations, would of course make the former poor; but there would not be less wealth in the world. A large sum paid for a trifle (as I have observed) is not money lost. It may be injudicious, and many such outlays might bring a man to penury; but others would possess, and, perhaps, judiciously use the money. The value of a thing is relative. The worth of water on the banks of the mighty Amazon or Mississippi is nothing, but it is very different in elevated and thickly-peopled districts; while, in some circumstances, a cup of this crystal fluid might be worth a bag of gold. The bursting of a foaming cataract from its native rocks into the ocean—a painting of the memory suggested, perhaps, to a man perishing with thirst—would seem like a prodigal waste of water.

I will now turn—or return to my subject. Every aspect of things and events has its dark and bright side. Every good is shadowed forth by its contrary.

Though I condemn some hobbies, which bring a disgrace on the fraternity, yet I much commend hobbies ingeneral, and think that every one ought to have his hobby-horse. A secondary source of interest and amusement of this kind, for those who have the necessary cares of providing an income, contributes to health and the enjoyment of life; while, as the best affections of man are reared in a contented soil, it cherishes amiability and other virtues. A man need not have an expensive one if he cannot afford it, and if he has what he dislikes he may exchange it for another. Indeed, he may, if he please, have a new one every year. However, choose what is tractable, lively, and free from vice, so that your health, intellect, and moral faculties may at the same time be benefited.

I have intimated that ease naturally succeeds labour,—that, without toil, there cannot be rest. We must not think of indulging ourselves in lounging, eating, drinking, or amusements, hour after hour in every day; such an attempt would occasion inexpressible weariness. We are, corporally and mentally, adapted for labour; hence, inactivity will, in some way or other, produce disease. Self-indulgence, beyond a certain point, is anything but beneficial, while moderate self-denial is contributive to happiness. Those, therefore, who have necessarily laborious engagements, may choose hobbies which will allow them

ease as a relaxation ; while others should take labour, bodily and mental, as a variation from the ordinary self-indulgent mode of living.

The taste of human beings, as we have seen, is extremely various, and so are the directions in which any particular variety may act. If a man have the constructive faculty, he may be induced to build houses, bridges, ships, or something different from all. The bent of his inclination may be regulated by a mere accident. If he be enthusiastic in his pursuits, he will, of course, consider all other matters as comparatively trifling. But, as a concurrence of many influences may have made him what he is, he must not expect that all, or many others, would be like him. They have not been endowed with the same capabilities, nor imbued with the same spirit, nor encircled with the same circumstances ; consequently, what may excite energy and high emotions of pleasure in one, may occasion indifference or even contempt in another. We must not expect, therefore, that our hobbies would be admired by every one, any more than those belonging to others would be petted by us. There is nothing so beautiful, in the eyes of mothers generally, as smiling, playful infants, and none are so lovely as their own ; but to an indifferent spectator, all infants are pretty nearly alike ; and to a very indifferent one,

no infant exhibits any kind of attraction. We choose a hobby because we admire it, and admire it the more because it is ours.

And now I may add what I mentioned in the beginning of this chapter. A person sometimes exclaims, "How swift is a glance of the mind!" At one moment we are at the equator, at another, the poles. Now we are viewing Pekin or the Great Wall of China; and now, as rapidly as the pen can note it, we are got among the civilization of central Europe. At one time, we are in the metropolis, and then suddenly we go to John o'Groat's house, or the Land's End in Cornwall. On one occasion, we walk with Nebuchadnezzar, and hear him exclaim, "Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and the honour of my majesty?" and immediately we are at home, listening to the barking of a dog, or the mewing of a cat. We behold the Imperial—the Roman city in flames, and hear the sixth of the Cæsars fiddling to the roaring conflagration, and then we find ourselves (after being lost in thought) listening to some street organ! Compared with such velocity—

"The tempest itself lags behind,
And the swift-winged arrows of light.'

This resembles what we sometimes hear or

read; but, of course, it is all a mistake. As a part must of necessity be imaginative, so all is imaginative. Nothing, of course, is wonderful, if it consists of what is ordinary and commonplace. The mind does not go out of its temple—the human cranium. It requires no longer time to fly to, or rather to think of, China, than of the next street to that in which a person lives. A journey to the Milky-way would be accomplished as easily as to a chimney-top. If a person read a list of all the capitals in Europe, and as he glanced down the column, perfectly understood the situation of these places, would it be supposed that his intellectual part had forsaken the body, and set out, alone, (like Satan in quest of the newly-made world,) on a rapid flight to those cities? If so, whom did it leave to take care of the body? The travelling of the mind is a fiction, grounded, not on analogy, or even poetical conception, but on unpoetical error.

CHAPTER XL.

A Plea for Infants.

It is generous and commendable to plead the cause of those who cannot defend themselves; whereas the malevolent and craven-hearted pounce on the weak, who cannot give blows in return. We have pleas for the prison captive and pleas for the manacled slave. If helplessness and innocence are eloquent calls on an advocate, then I am sure I do not stir in this matter without being most reasonably moved. Having, as I have said, seven little ones—the most valuable property, (excepting my wife,) that I possess—I may be allowed to understand something of the subject on which I write. I assert then that infants have been most shamefully maligned; that, if it were not for the natural affection of parents, especially of mothers, they would have been looked on and treated worse than the offspring of brute-beasts. All this has arisen

from the mental whims and oddities of monks and such other blots on the fair face of human nature. I do not meddle with theology; I leave all nice points to divines. Indeed, this is not a question of theology, but of natural history. I do not, I believe, violate the rule *ne sutor ultra crepidam*, and I can, I hope, give an honest opinion on a plain matter. Beyond this small advantage, however, I have on my side the whole host of mothers; and, far beyond, that Divine Personage in whom all the best qualities of human nature shone forth conspicuously, exciting the admiration of every one worthy of the name of man. Now, this infallible Judge of the matter declares that infants are innocent and lovely; so spotless and pure that "of such is the kingdom of heaven;" and unless men become so, they cannot enter that blissful region. If such high authority asserts this, who will listen to a crew of monkish visionaries; men from whose breasts the finer and more noble feelings of humanity have been banished? How can they judge, when they have neither Divine teaching, nor the testimony of civilized and humanized mankind as a guide? But what do these scandalizers say? That every babe comes into the world possessed of a devil! If the highest honour which the human frame ever received was a connection with the Personage to whom I have referred, the deepest degradation

would be the being possessed by and instinct with a devil! Mothers! can you fondle and love—not a viper, a scorpion, but a creature whose organs of vision are, also, the eyes of a fiend!—whose nostrils are channels of the deadly breath of a denizen of hell! Surely, all this must be fiction, not fact—absurd, despicable, disgraceful. The united voice of all humanized Christian persons condemns it. But it was believed to be true; and the machinery preserved among the celibatic clergy declares it to be so: while the opinions spread abroad among men who hold as a system what, after a quiet consideration, they would deem absurd as a reality, tend to encourage the great and scandalizing error. If what I have said of this iniquity of monkery be not correct, how is it that there are exorcists ordained by a solemn office (see *Pontificale Romanum*) to the duty of expelling the actual devil from a babe? And how is it that (in order to give every facility to the operator, and, at the same time, to provide a free passage for the expelled) there is an open door in the roof over the font? And how is it that, in old pictorial representations of baptism, the fiend is exhibited as springing affrighted from the mouth or nostrils of the babe, or scampering through the door-way as if he feared to leave his tail behind? All this, if it were not disgraceful, would be extremely amusing. One's indignation, however, takes away the relish for the joke.

Two or three questions will naturally present themselves in connection with the subject to which I have referred. Let not the imp-fanciers be alarmed; for truth, instead of avoiding, invites investigation. Are the fiends that enter and take possession of infant bodies, engaged exclusively in this duty? Are they of a definite number? and if so, would there not, in a dearth of population, be a great many waiting for engagement, and wasting their time in unprofitable idleness; while on a large increase of the human family, there would be too few to perform the work? Are they infantine or adult imps? If a fiend be not expelled, owing to some defect in the process, or the absence of *will* in the operator, would it remain during the life of the person? On being expelled, or otherwise disconnected from a human being, would it go immediately into another, or wait for its turn? As the teachers in the New Testament give us no information on the matter, and the theorists profess to know, an instructive reply to these queries would tend very much to remove the doubts of the incredulous. Let it not be said "the questions are irrelevant;" for they would be perfectly relevant if the hypothesis were anything but fiction.

It will be said that, among men of sense, all this is considered as a dead letter. If so, why do not some, who profess to be of this character expunge the "dead letter" from their alphabet?

However, we may scatter this nonsense to the winds, and maintain (as we know and feel it) that infants are beautiful, pure, loveable creatures; and that it is only by turning back to their heavenly purity that we shall render ourselves acceptable to the Great Father of the human family.

But it has been, and will be asserted, "Infants are frequently perverse, ill-tempered, &c." Now, O man, before you give an opinion, or express one by epithets, pause for a moment. "Perverse! ill-tempered!" Are the indications of uneasiness and suffering to be considered as peevishness or ill-temper? What think you of acute pains in teething and other ailments to which they are liable? Such pains as the censurer himself, perhaps, would not endure without irritability and querulousness. He, however, could explain why: the other, unfortunately, could not. I would much rather take the judgment of a sensible and *natural* mother on this point, than of all the insensible and unnatural speculators in Christendom or Heathendom.

"Perverse, I am sure they are!" exclaims the infant foe. In reply, I tell him that there is, in the training of human beings, a balance of forces. The God of Nature has implanted in infant man, as well as the young of brutes, a disposition to preserve and to benefit self. Immature judgment

runs in one direction, mature in another. The former must be neutralized by the latter. If the almost instinctive principles which regulate infants are culpable, what must we say, what do we say, of Him who appointed them?

Infants are pure, innocent, and loveable; but, as the flower expands, the loveliness increases. A beautiful girl of three years old, (such a one I have in my mind's eye—who, I know, was never exorcised by Heathen or Papist,) graceful in form, agile as a gazelle, her long auburn locks curling in streamlets to her shoulders, her blue eyes bright with expression and melting with tenderness; her dimpled, glossy cheeks and ruddy lips instinct with life and feeling—such a being I look on as one of the most lovely productions of the Creator—one that I believe, and am sure of, was never intended as a temple for a fiend—though it was for that Great Spirit who is the source of all moral as well as natural beauty.

CHAPTER XLI.

Legal Fictions.

I do not wish, needlessly, to raise objections to anything which is appointed for me as a duty; but sometimes the "presentment" of an evil brings about an "abatement." I am about to refer to a bill of indictment. A man is committed to gaol for having stolen (we will say) £14. The legal instrument expresses itself in this extravagant style—"Twenty pieces of the current coin called sovereigns, twenty pieces of the current coin called half-sovereigns, twenty pieces of the current coin called shillings," &c., &c. I know that, when scruples have been expressed, it has been said that the matter can be most satisfactorily explained. I will, therefore, (as an experiment) suppose that it may be, that the language is truthful and conformable to our best modes of narration. That the less may be included in the greater is an axiom recognised by all mathemati-

cians and legislators: thus, the fourteen pounds stolen would be included in the twenty of the indictment. The half-sovereigns, by the same rule, in the sovereigns, and the shillings in the half-sovereigns. What could be more logically clear than this? Then, as to our usual mode of expression:—suppose, for instance, an urchin stole a piece of leaden pipe; the natural and simple way of expressing it would be—five pieces of pipe of the value of sixpence; five pieces of metal tube of the value of other sixpence; five pieces of leaden cylinder of the value of other sixpence; five pounds weight of metal of the value of other sixpence; “he did” (to quote from an indictment) “there take, steal, and carry away, contrary to the peace of our Sovereign Lady the Queen, her crown and dignity.” Now, if we wished to describe the robbery, how could we do it in a more simple, concise, and truthful manner? You perceive there is no redundancy—not a word which could be spared consistently with the clear and definite nature of the charge. To be sure, some might object that the peace of the Queen, her crown and dignity, were not seriously marred by the urchin’s tricks. But we must not quarrel about trifles.

We will now suppose that a person has taken a cold; and see how admirably this style of language describes it! Five maladies of the human

system called colds ; five diseases of the human frame called inflammation of the trachea ; five disorders of the system called pleurisy ; five diseases of the body called agues ; twenty inconveniences known by the name of sternutations ; forty attacks of convulsions of the lungs occasioned by vellication ; he did there take and carry away, contrary to the peace of our unfortunate friend the patient, his wife and family !

Or, let us try another description in the same concise and simple style. An artist, for instance, paints the portrait of a gentleman ; and a contemporary or an historian would thus relate it : four resemblances of the human creature called man ; four portraits of the human being called woman ; four likenesses of the human figure called a male child ; four resemblances of the human creature called a female child ; he did there take, make, and carry away, contrary to the peace of that omnipotent despot Indolence, his crown and dignity. Now I put the question to any impartial person, can you reasonably object to this kind of phraseology ? I do confess, for myself, that, having considered the matter a moment (*i.e.*, five moments, five minutes, five hours, days, months, years !), I am come to the conclusion that a more concise, rational, and truthful kind of language *might* be employed. A look of incredulity, a slight expression of honest indignation, and then

a smile at the absurdity of the whole, may often be seen on the countenance of a man of sense when listening to a bill of indictment. And not the least ridiculous part of the matter is, that the monition to a witness to speak the truth is preceded by the reading of this tissue of falsehoods!

The question as to how, when, and by whom, the evil might be removed; or whether it be occasional or universal, optional or imperative; whether it must be borne with and smiled at, or objected to, has nothing to do with the abstract character of falsehood, verbosity, and absurdity.

CHAPTER XLII.

Semper Idem.

LEGAL responsibility for the acts of some previous period naturally occasions one to speculate on personal identity. "The fashion of this world passeth away;" and though, in respect of general principles, there is "no new thing under the sun," yet, in regard to particulars, everything is new. The latter applies, in a striking manner, to human beings. We were, of course, at one time infants; and now, having arrived at the stature of manhood, we are, by a variety of influences, continually changed. A person on one occasion is thin, on another corpulent; now in vigorous health, then in languishing sickness; once in the prime of manhood, now in the decrepitude of old age. The mind at one time was immature, indeed, almost unconscious; at another, active and vigorous; and now, perhaps, it is imbecile. But, with all these variations of mind and body,

every one supposes that he is the same person that he always was. He is aware of the external and internal changes; but he believes that the words *I* and *myself* were always applicable to him, and always will be.

The material of a river is continually passing away. The waters of to-day are not those of yesterday; and yet the identity of the river is, in some respects, preserved. The Thames is the same Thames that flowed a thousand years ago. The changes in the human structure are less rapid, but not less certain. The form of the river, as well as the man, varies slowly, but the causes of the two are very dissimilar. Mere outline does not constitute identity; for two persons may be more alike than either would be with himself five-and-twenty years before. Strictly speaking, there is no identity in regard to the human body. A person is continually viewing himself; and the change which occurs in the interval of any two periods is so small that he does not perceive it. If a man were living in a tent on some open country, and his domicile, by means unknown to him, were removed an inch every week, he would not perceive the difference—the site of his residence would seem to be unvaried. A person, therefore, in his own conviction, is always the same; but if another looked at him, who had known him thirty years before, he would suppose

that he had seen two different persons. An accurate portrait of an infant, another taken in a state of childhood, another of youth, another of manhood, and another of decrepid fourscore, although representations of one who had borne the same name in the different stages of life, would be portraits of five different persons.

If the intellectual principle were, as some have supposed, material, it would be subject to the ordinary laws of matter; and there would be no real identity of the human mind or body. The phrase "personal identity" would, in that case, be absurd.

The whole system of Divine legislation—the existence of human responsibility—would imply that there is something in man independent of the laws of matter—something that was, is, and shall be. Otherwise, it would be inconsistent for a person to suffer disadvantage for the faults of his youth, or the old man for the sins of middle age. And still more absurd would it be for the conscious being removed beyond the last barrier of mortality, to be rewarded or punished for what another substance, called by his name, had performed. Time *now* is very different from time past or time future; so that a man would not be *he* that was, or that will be; but the past would have been occupied by his predecessor, and the future would be by his successor; and how could one be responsible for the other?

The conviction that we are the same intellectual beings who existed yesterday and last year, arises involuntarily. There is no process of reasoning, no chain of causes and effects; we cannot, therefore, describe what exists not, or give a reason why we possess the impression. The simple fact that we find something in this investigation beyond the reach of ordinary logic, and superior to the laws of material existence, would imply that our personal identity is dependent on what is immaterial and spiritual.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Some more Gossip from a Friend.

"I do, as I believe I intimated in my last note, condemn egotism, and yet sometimes I find myself (when lost, and induced to go in pursuit of self) sinking into it. I call it *sinking*, because, undoubtedly, it is a weakness. The reason is apparent; a man, we may be sure, might have something better to think of. The talking of self however, is not, generally, so reprehensible as the talking of others, unless, indeed, we adopt the same rule with both—to say nothing but what is good. Commonly, people exhibit two portraits at the same time (for great and little—good and bad, are best seen by contrast)—one of self, another of a neighbour. The former set off to advantage by artful touches; the latter represented as 'all worse and no better;' then, with evident complacency, we are invited to 'look on this picture and on that.'

"If egotism be allowable, it is when, without sinister design, a man describes himself as he is. We may learn much of human nature from reporters of this class. They are, perhaps, very humble, or not very reflective. When I commit this venial sin (if it be one), attribute it to the latter; and, in making this request, I shall, I know, in your favourable judgment, establish a claim to the former.

"People, if they have a disposition to talk, must talk about something; and yet, we often hear it said that one-half of the tattle in the world is about nothing. If they do not talk sense, they must nonsense; if their language be not complimentary, it must be condemnatory; if they do not communicate what is common property, they must what is exclusive or secret. The Athenians were constantly craving something new—the earliest intelligence. It was their aim, I fancy, to break the shell and get at the contents before the envelope would, in the ordinary course of events, have been opened. Human nature is, all over the world and in all ages, alike. Most of the eggs which those caterers give us are newly laid, and yet they are addle. Curiosity to know, and anxiety to tell, prevent a great store of materials from lying in the arcana of the goddess Tacita. That the personage who enforced and preserved silence was a female, proves that no male could be entrusted

with the duty. However, there is little in the world, which, if examined, does not seem natural, or, at least, explicable. The possessor of a secret has received early, perhaps exclusive, intelligence. The being entrusted with it was a mark of confidence and friendship. These compliments would be worth nothing if no one knew of them. Besides, we feel pleasure in making ourselves interesting and agreeable; while nothing contributes to this result more than the exciting and gratifying curiosity. The persons who listen to us would, without doubt, tell the secret, as a secret, to their friends; and Mr. —, Mrs. —, or Miss —, would be mentioned as the source of the information. This, of course, would establish the person as an oracle—a dispenser of early, perhaps exclusive, intelligence—one acquainted with everything; so that (judging of the future by the past) knowledge would be more likely to emanate from that source than any other.

“There may be, also (as birds warble for the pleasure of the thing, and dogs bark sometimes for a similar purpose), a disposition to be loquacious; and, really, I must maintain that this is not always objectionable. I would much rather, for instance, spend an hour with a lady who talked too much than too little. Dumb people who compel you to speak for them and yourself, are very dull companions. Silence and wisdom are

not so often connected as ditto and stupidity; and of course, it is more agreeable to relate what is new and stirring, than stale and unattractive. Besides, some people are never so uneasy as when they are easy. They must step into troubled water in order to feel the balmy influence of satisfaction and delight. They plunge into difficulties, and are most pleasingly engaged in planning how to get out. However, the greater number of transgressors exist among those who, although they do not think of the reason, reveal the secret (without intending the least harm to any one), merely because they find, as the unpractised do with their money, that the possession of it is attended with uneasiness.

“I question whether a great many of the defects of the world are not, like objects in a mist, magnified by distance. When we approach very near, we find that the apparent elephant is nothing but a donkey, and the towering mansion a haystack. If people were more sociable, they would be more friendly; they would generally rise in each other's esteem. I am, I know, supposed to be eccentric; but a great deal of my fancied eccentricity would vanish on a close inspection.

“‘Would,’ with could, should, might, &c., comprehends the greater part of the inflections of the verb *to do*. All these words, of course, express the power, inclination, or opportunity,

but not the act; so that, in reality, *to do* signifies generally the condition of being left undone. The expression—‘It might happen,’ comprehends more than ever did or will occur. We are apt to speculate on what might be. I confess that I am inclined to this folly—one that sometimes disturbs the mind, and brings up a stirring array of ghastly phantoms. For instance, my favourite puss, Lily, was a few days since on the eve of being impaled; and I thought what *might* have happened. An injury to catgut might have occasioned much caterwauling; and if the owner (who was capable of strong emotion) had wept, there might have been a cataract of tears: then, as another item in the category, it might have been succeeded by catalepsy; while the winding-up of the catastrophe, without any catachresis, might have been (and this is the last article in the catalogue) an introduction of Lily to some cat-mural residence; perhaps, an abode among the catacombs.

“‘Like,’ it is said, ‘produces like;’ but what the first ‘like’ resembles before the second is produced, I know not. A thing may be somewhat like another, though different. A proof is, that caterwauling, by a sort of catenation, brought to my mental notice those little nursery harmonicons whose music so interests us. It warned me, also, to inform you that I have as many as nine! I

really can hardly say, generally, how many I have. I am obliged to count them on my fingers. A short time since, I injured the fourth digitus of my left hand; and this I found a great convenience, for I knew that all the way round were five, and up to this one inclusive, four; four and five—nine. Thus, at a moment's notice, I could tell how many children I had.

“ Talking about numbers reminds me of a discovery which I have made of numerical power. I will give you a specimen. If two and two make four, the remainder will be eight. Because there would be the makers and the things made. Take two from four, and there remain six. For, if the two are distinct from the four, the latter exist as well as the former, and, together, amount to six.

“ Being anxious, as of course I ought, to turn éverything to some account, I have been speculating on certain utilities connected with the wonderful, indeed preternatural system of mesmerism. Do not laugh, for useful they are and feasible, as surely as this admirable science is a system of truth. If an unfortunate husband has committed a fault—(we all know how prone the best of us are to such failings),—and he expects a condemnatory oration from his lawful governess and ‘better-half,’ he has no occasion to approach her with fear and trembling; for, with judicious

'passes,' he may (if I may so say) congealate her effervescences; she will then exhibit a rigid example of domestic tranquillity, like 'Patience on a monument. In due time, having admired the glorious reformation, he may remove the spell, and, in all probability, she will have forgotten the grievance; she will awake, sweet and blooming, like a May morning. 'Dear me, John!' says she, 'I have had a queer dream. I feel quite condemned; but let it pass!'—and John is quite satisfied that it should.

"If a witness, in a court of justice, be giving evidence against you contrary to your wishes; or a man of the law be pleading the cause of your opponent; or if any one be 'wide awake' to take advantage of your pocket, you can liberate yourself from these evils by transporting the agent to the province or region of Somnus.

"We have heard of the practice, in manufacturing towns, of drugging infants to make them patient and noiseless during the absence of their parents. But how extremely simple is my method of quieting these harmonicons! The mothers could steep the little dears in mesmeric sleep, which would stiffen their limbs, and make them like statues; then put them away in the dresser-drawers, or some other convenient place, until the evening; when the darlings, being restored to consciousness, would laugh, and jump, and cry, and romp, as if they had been alive all

day. Is not this better than doses of Godfrey's Cordial, or Daffy's Elixir?

"If there are stirs and contentions in our streets, volleys of uncomplimentary language and unsolicited blows, requiring the kind attention of the police, there would be no occasion for breaking of heads or bruising of arms to decoy the belligerents to peace; but the heralds of the law, flying on the wings of authority (with or without embroidered collars and good-conduct stripes), would make the mysterious motions—passing strange to all that would behold them—when the tongue of the scold would be paralysed, and the arm of the pugilist stiffened. The petrified 'plagues' might then, in a hand-cart, be wheeled to the station-house.

"The great and crowning achievement, however, would be the abolition of the horrors of war. Armies would engage, not in deadly, but in deadening conflict. Rank would oppose rank, not with fixed bayonets, but with arms extended, each man endeavouring to fix his antagonist. Hundreds of thousands might be left on the field of battle, not stiffened corpses, but in some respects, rigid disciplinarians. They had fallen in doing their duty.

"You will surely confess that I have been turning my talents to some account, for the benefit of the public.

"I have been very lately conversing with a

friend who had gone into the other world. Now don't be alarmed—although I am relating a fact. He did visit the other world, and came back among his friends. I don't mean in the way that the 'Rappers' pretend, or any others that are 'the media' of such rapping falsehoods; but, as all the orthodox admit, there are two worlds, the old and the new. He visited, then, the new world, and made some wonderful discoveries in parts which were never before (as he supposes) trodden by human feet.

"I must communicate these marvellous things on some future occasion, and as, doubtless, it will be an intellectual meal, tasteful and suitable, fulfilling and satisfactory—I may, in thus transferring it, be 'looked up to,' by admiring generations, as the author of a 'moveable feast.'

"Two or three matters have lately presented themselves to my notice, and furnished matter for sapient cogitation. I use the word 'sapient' advisedly; which means, of course, that it is done on the *advised* principle;—what that is I scarcely know: I conclude, however, that the expression would not be used, if it did not signify something. One is, the extreme folly of persons who spend hour after hour, or day after day, in searching for a thing *where it is not*. Common sense would teach them that it could never be found there, whereas, if they went where it was they would find it immediately.

“ In my last letter, I said something of prose writing, but nothing of poetry. I have lately been thinking what a queer race of mortals (*Qy.* immortals) poets are. There is scarcely one of them but ought to undergo (in order to rid him of his whims and crudities), a course of purgation, either on the earth or in the great inverted cone of which one of their number (Dante) discourses so sensibly. Alas, for poets ! they are a most restless set—starting ideas, hunting them, throwing away the solid matter and stuffing the skins ; then hanging them in rows, and making—*blank* verse. Sometimes they tie them in couples by the tails. This is *rhyme*. Then they divide and subdivide the labours of their heads and hands ; calling one epic, another dramatic, a third elegiac, a fourth allegoric, fifth heroic, sixth didactic, seventh lyric, and onward one might go, but this is enough to show the eccentricity of these beings. Some of the monsters generated by poetic brains have possessed many *feet*, and bodies so long that no one has had time or patience to pace them from head to tail.

“ I must, however, with much sympathy for your patience, draw to a close. What a wonderfully comprehensive word the verb *to draw* is ! The fact is that all—men, women, and children—in one way or another can draw. Some can draw backward, and some forward ; some can draw out, and some in ; some over, and some under ; some,

up, and some down ; some can draw off, and some near. Nor is the acquirement confined to the species *homo sapiens*, for it exists also in the brute-creation. The horse, as we well know, can draw ; and that sweet-voiced quadruped with long ears, whose clear and mellifluous notes gladden all hearts, can draw : and so can the ox, and so can the dog ; but as he runs so close to the ground, and is so dogged in his nature, he is, as you are aware, forbidden by Act of Parliament to draw. In giving an opinion, however, I should draw my client into an error (if he drew his information from me) unless I were to withdraw a part of this statement, and draw forward some qualifying observation, which would draw out the whole matter in a true aspect. The fact is that dogs may draw in any place besides the metropolis. Hence, in all other parts, the fraternity may enjoy, in addition to that of equality, the blessing of liberty ; and, as one result of it, every one may draw according to his natural gifts, acquired whims, or the allowance of his master. Or, every one may draw *not* according to his perverse ways. Thus, a 'sad dog' may draw in a lively manner. A 'careless dog' may draw cautiously. A 'merry dog' may not neglect his drawing. A 'useless dog' may be a great help. A 'worthless dog' may draw worthily. A 'reckless dog' may not make a wreck of his 'trap.' A 'runaway dog' may finish his drawing first.

“As to subjects for the exercise of the art, they are innumerable. We may draw bridges, or male-factors, or even lightnings. We may draw prizes or draw blanks. We may draw the frosty air of December out, or the warm air of the drawing-room in. We may draw over, when we sail along on some aerial steam-bird—looking down on church-towers as if they were cabin-chimneys; and we may draw under, when, instead of going horizontally, it would go perpendicularly, and carry us much beneath the smooth, shining surface of the enticing ocean. We may draw up, if we have sunk into a quagmire. We may draw off, when our boots are dirty; and draw near when the table is laid and all is ready. And as every thing must have an ending that ever had a beginning, we may draw to a close—as, I am sure, I must do now.

“Yours truly.”

CHAPTER XLIV.

Another School Ordeal.

MY nephew Tom has sent to me a sketch of a second school-examination. Like the former, it may pass for just what it is worth. I have said it is an infant-school.

"Now, my dears! stand in a row, and behave well."

Omnes. "Yes, ma'am."

No. 8. "We always does behave, ma'am."

"Yes, in some way. Now, you have had many lessons on what I am going to question you: and I hope you will remember well. Who were the Muses?"

No. 3. "I think it was Moses."

"No, child! no. This is a bad beginning. No. 4, you are playing with your fingers. Hold up your head, and attend to what I say. The Muses were a sort of incorporeal young ladies, who presided—"

No. 2. "I know. There was nine."

"You must not say *was*, but *were*."

No. 6. "Wear and tear."

"You are a very rude child. There were nine Muses. Do you know their names?"

No. 4. "Susannah and the Elders."

"No, no! What are you talking about?"

No. 3. "I know."

"Well, go on."

No. 3. "I can't tell."

No. 7. "One was called Polly something."

"Polyhymnia."

No. 4. "I know one,—Belshazzar."

"No, no, child! You are completely out."

No. 8. "Please ma'am, No. 7 is pinching of me."

"For shame, No. 7! I see you have forgotten the Muses. How many Graces were there?"

No. 5. "Two. One before, and one after meat."

"You are wrong again. They had nothing to do with meat."

No. 4. "I know a girl that's called Grace."

"There were three Graces. Who were they?"

No. 2.—(breathlessly). "Shedack, Meysh, and Bedshego."

"No, no! you are quite wrong. Besides, you do not pronounce distinctly. These were three gentlemen that—"

No. 3. "Please 'em, No. 4 is kicking me."

"Children, you must behave better. Now tell me the names of the Graces."

No. 2. "I can tell now. Lya, Frostne, and Salah."

"That's a good girl! But, why don't you learn to speak plainly? Aglaia, Euphrosyne, and Thalia. Remember the names."

Omnes. "Yes, ma'am."

No. 3. "I said I would tell. Please 'em, No. 2 looked into a book."

"Silence, child! you must not tell tales. How many kinds of Gods were there?"

No. 1. "Two. Gods and Goddesses."

"No, no! Leave out the Goddesses, for the present."

No. 6. "Gods of brass, and Gods of wood."

"I don't mean images."

No. 8. "The Bible says there be only one God."

"That is not what I am talking about. I mean the Gods of the Greeks and Romans, that never had any existence."

No. 8. "Hau!"

No. 2. "I know. There were Gods reschal and cheschal."

"There were Gods terrestrial and celestial. Do you know any of them?"

No. 2. "I never saw 'em."

"But you have heard, and read, and learnt of them."

No. 7. "There was Vulcan that blowed the bellowses."

"No, my dear! That is not the way to speak."

No. 3. "And Chaos with two faces."

"I suppose you mean Janus."

No. 6. "I know one. I think it was Judea."

"No, my dear! I suppose you mean Juno, but she was a Goddess."

No. 8. "And there was Bakkey."

"Bacchus, you mean. You get on with this better than the other. Now, we will go to something else. Who was the greatest orator of antiquity?"

No. 7. "Please, ma'am, I don't know where antiquity was."

"Early times, I mean."

No. 3. "Do you mean in the morning? Mother says, early to bed, and early to——"

"No, no, child! I mean ancient times—hundreds of years ago. Now, tell me, who was the greatest orator of ancient times?"

No. 8. "Is orator the same as emperor?"

"No. An orator is one that speaks."

No. 7. "I think Balaam's ass."

"What are you talking of? Who was the greatest among men?"

No. 10. "Goliath."

"Child! I am ashamed of you. Who was the most eloquent speaker?"

No. 5. "I think 'twas Deborah."

"Deborah was not a man."

No. 5. "Then 'twas Demos."

"Demosthenes. You are pretty near. Where was Greece?"

No. 1. "In Judea."

No. 2. "In Galilee of the Gentiles."

No. 3. "In the Babylonish captivity."

No. 4. "In the Red Sea."

"Now, remember. It was in some part of the earth, and not in the sea."

No. 5. "In America."

No. 6. "In Beersheba."

No. 7. "In the equinox."

"That is not a country. No. 4, why are you laughing?"

No. 4. "Please, ma'am, No. 3 said 'twas in a candlestick."

"For shame. These are not things to be laughed at. You ought to learn your tasks well, and remember them, so that when you are examined, you may avoid blunders. In many schools, little children of three, and even two years, can answer questions in history and geography, mythology and mathematics: and they are the wonder of the country. No. 4, you are laughing again.

No. 4. "Please, ma'am, No. 3 pinched me."

"For shame! for shame! you are naughty children. You must do better next time."

Omnes. "Yes, ma'am."

CHAPTER XLV.

Past Times and Future Prospects.

WE exist (as I think I have before said) in a system of relations. We feel, we see, we know, we anticipate agreeably with the influences by which we are surrounded. The rule which applies to what we are, governs our visions of the past and expectations of the future. Reason and imagination are the two guiding principles of man. The boundary line of one, on one side, is that of the other. History carries us back to the realms of fiction, and science onward to the realms of imagination; while, in both cases, the conjectural occupies not only (if I may so say) the extremities of length, but those also of breadth.

History is, in one respect, governed by the laws of perspective. Proximate objects are exhibited in their full size, with every peculiarity of character. Thus, the actions of eminent men, in recent times, are fully recorded; but as we go from the present

to the past, the narrative is contracted until it is dwindled into almost nothing. For instance, early records tell us that on or about a particular period, a certain city was built, a kingdom founded, a monarch dethroned; but we read nothing more of the city, the kingdom, or the man. Objects become not only diminished, but obscure; so that places, times, or characters are confounded with each other, until the mists of oblivion envelope all.

There is, however, a sphere of operation for the fancy, where there is none for the reason: and thus, in that very mist, the imagination has created and exhibited all kinds of momentous and wondrous scenes. One has beheld the earth (as he has pictured it) thousands of thousands of years ago, as it always had been and ever will be, beautiful in the blushing colours of youth. Another has contemplated it in its infant days, when, from amidst chaos and waters, it burst forth and glowed in the light of the universe; another has traced it slowly rising as the result of the antagonist principles of light and darkness. Another as the practical effect of perfect forms and ideas. Another has contemplated the immature world growing to maturity—not a new creation, but a regeneration, the Phœnix from the ashes of its predecessor, pluming its wings, and rejoicing in the light of heaven. Another, in that oblivious

mist, has traced the wondrous changes from not only globe to globe, but animal to animal, plant to plant, and intelligence to intelligence. Thus, where history ends, invention begins; and as every philosopher who has depended on himself has had a peculiar theory, we find a wonderful variety of poetical fancies.

Imagination acts (as I have said) on the boundary of all positive knowledge, before History—contemporaneous with it, and in the vast, the limitless regions of the future. It is, however, generally supposed that Science, in her progress, breaks down the speculations of Fancy, and reduces all our conceptions to subjects of weight and measure. A most melancholy result and dreary anticipation, if true. It is, happily, a mistake. Imagination, when it does not travel by the side of Reason, or stop to examine what its proud companion would not or could not discern, always travels in advance of Reason. Therefore, extend as we may the observations—the discoveries of Nature, we shall perceive, on the distant horizon, gleamings of light from the regions of fancy and invention.

If the circle of knowledge be extended, it will enlarge the circle of imagination. Knowledge is, abstractedly considered, without limits, and the ideal universe is boundless: hence, we have no reason to fear that philosophy or poetry will ever cease to exist. It is true that if the attention of

human beings be diverted from one class of investigations to another, there must be a corresponding result. Thus, a man or an age may become more or less scientific; more or less poetic; more or less indifferent to, or anxious for, mental acquirements.

But, generally speaking, as facts increase, phenomena are multiplied, and subjects for speculation become more numerous, so that the invention, the imagination, and the fancy have an abundance of material, and an ample sphere for operation.

It would be inconsistent with the economy of existence, if one mental faculty were the antagonist of another; if the reason, for example, were the enemy of the imagination. The truth is that these powers are, in some measure, the helpers and regulators of each other. Reason alone would become dull and prosy. Imagination alone would become erratic. We naturally proceed from what is known, to what is not known. Discoveries, however, even in physics, are attributable in a great degree to the imagination.

A contemplation of the present does not hinder us from beholding the future—from anticipating coming events in their varied forms and aspects. A familiarity with our own system does not prevent us from soaring among other spheres. What could the reason do without the aid of the imagination, in her excursions among the vast and remote? An acquaintance with the material universe does

not prevent us from drawing aside the veil occasionally, and gazing with astonishment, on the almost formless forms and unearthly splendours of spiritual existence. The beholding of cities and palaces with our organs of vision, does not prevent the fancy from beholding cities and palaces in the clouds. The imagination had an extensive sphere of operation, when she was encircled by the solid cerulean vaults of the ancient philosophy. How must it be, in the present day, when, though she soar on the strongest pinions, with the loftiest purposes—her wings tipped with the rays of Divinity—she could never reach the verge of being, and scale the battlements of the universe!

CHAPTER XLVI.

Some more Sayings of my Father.

I HOLD it right that we should respect and reverence the portraits of our parents, painted in the memory ; and, with solicitude, treasure up their sayings. “ In order to further a thing,” as my father used to observe, “ you must bring it near to you.” I will, therefore, comply with the monition, and endeavour to string up a few of his observations.

“ People,” said my father, “ speak of successive days, as if succession consisted of parts of a circle ; but one, two, and three, do not succeed each other ; if they did, one would succeed two, and two, three.” “ It must not be imagined that houses originally were thatched by laying the reed in sealing-wax, merely because Virgil says—

‘ Pan primus calamos cera conjungere plures
Instituit.’

Nor that, because ‘ pan’ signifies the whole, there

may not be a pan which is not whole—if, indeed, that may be termed a pan which is only part of one. ‘Who shall decide when doctors disagree?’ One,” he continued, “who is independent of the fraternity—Nature.” A gentleman complained that he rarely dined without a sense of repletion; and craved my father’s advice. “Smith,” said he, “always finish a meal with an empty stomach.” “Gold,” he observed, “is not uniformly abundant. Many a man has a lac of rupees in India, and many a man a lack of guineas in England.” “A belt is a band; but a military belt is very different from a military band.” “The most handy thing is a glove; and the most unhandy, that which cannot be reached.” “A good companion is better than the best book; and a bad one worse than the worst book.” “There is nothing so courageous as certain birds. They live ‘game’, and die ‘game’, and they are ‘game’ after death, caring nothing for a basting from the cook.” “Is the spitting of a goose expectoration?” “A scrubby man is one who scrubs out of you all esteem for him.” “One has never so much ‘up-hill work’ as when he is ‘going down.’” “A man who is done for, is undone.” “A man who is absent may be actually present and beside himself.” “A ‘bootless man’ is either a man who has one boot less than he had before; or, having possessed one boot, he has now none at all. May

we infer, hence, that formerly a person needed but one boot? This conclusion, though novel, would receive much support from the phrase—'He has not a leg to stand on;' which clearly recognises, in ordinary cases, the sufficiency of one leg; and, if one leg, consequently one boot." "Extra or unnecessary time in sleep is the blotting out of so much of our existence." "A miser is a materialist. He embraces the matter, and rejects the spirit. He makes a god of his money, but it is an idol which cannot act. He lavishes his affections on it; he sacrifices his earthly happiness at its shrine. It is unconscious of the honour!" "Two sorts of persons are very pitiable—those who have lost friends, and mourn deeply for them; and those who have lost friends, and, owing to callousness of heart, do not mourn at all." "Beauty is not the opposite of deformity; but symmetry is. Beauty includes outline, colour, light and shade. So much is necessary to constitute beauty that it would be, of necessity, very rare." "The mind of man is a microcosm. It possesses in a rudimentary or mature state, all the dispositions and qualities of the great world." "Deep sorrow is the darkness of night; insensibility, the blankness of it." "The dead are made honour-bearers. They are laden with honours that they may hand them back to survivors." "Light and shade are essential to material form; and, on a similar principle, all our

wisdom is rounded off into folly; our virtue into vice; our knowledge into ignorance. There is none perfect—but one.”

Many of the sayings which I have quoted will be considered as mere trifles; and my honouring them with a presentation to the reader will be attributed to filial partiality; so also, perhaps, will a light, playful effort of his, inscribed on a fly-leaf of a book of proverbs—:

“ ‘ *Follow the light.* ’

“ We cannot unless the light go from us. While it remains, we may remain. If the light go out, of course, we may go out.

“ ‘ *Give heed to wisdom.* ’

“ We must possess heed or caution before we could give it: but wisdom is the last that would need it.

“ ‘ *Give an ear to counsel.* ’

“ That counsel may understand what we say.

“ ‘ *Mind what you are about.* ’

“ Or, rather, what is about you.

“ ‘ *Be wide awake.* ’

“ That is, your eyes, mouth, and understanding must be gaping.

“ ‘ *Keep your eyes open.* ’

“ Except about seven hours out of the twenty-four, when they ought to be closed. Nor ought they to be wide open when the person winks; nor when dust is on the wing, nor when flies are;

nor when little birds might peck at the apple—
for this would be sad fruit of a wide-awake system.

“ ‘*Mind your eye.*’

“The very thing that has just been said. The
monition ‘Keep your eyes open’ should be tem-
pered by that salutary warning, ‘Mind your eye.’

“ ‘*Mind yourself.*’

“This is generical benevolence—relating to the
whole man. You must take care that you do
not forget yourself, lest self should become
alienated from you; and the kind offices of some
friend be necessary to introduce you to the stranger.

“ ‘*All right.*’

“A new condition of things designed as a
temporary set-off to ‘*All wrong,*’ the natural and
favourite phrase.

“ ‘*Hold hard.*’

“If you have anything worthy of being held.

“ ‘*Be alive.*’

“Most people have been ever since they were
born; and will be all their days.”





